

TIME AND STRUCTURAL TECHNIQUE IN SOME  
TWENTIETH CENTURY SPANISH NOVELISTS.

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## SUMMARY

The importance of the theme of time and history in contemporary ideology can be amply illustrated from twentieth-century Spanish literature. This reflects a general Western tendency: time has become an almost obsessive concern and finds expression as such in the works of Proust, Ortega and Faulkner, to mention only three of a host of relevant figures. The Spanish novel boasts a large number of works illustrative of the theme.

Fiction, as a literary genre, is especially apt for the expression of the idea of time, for its very form is temporal in nature: the writer constructs his work in the medium of time, the reader peruses it in a temporal process of assimilation and, on a more profound level, the novel's plot represents a fictional duration, an action which can only occur in a developing context of time. "Plot", here, is to be considered synonymous with 'horizontal structure', by which is meant the development of the novel's thematic and narrative elements throughout the work's consecutive form. Levi-Strauss provides a useful definition which may be applied to stock literary terminology: "Form is defined by opposition to a content which is foreign to it; but structure has no distinct content. It is the content itself apprehended in a logical organisation..."<sup>(i)</sup> A novel's structure is the embodiment of meaning in form; since it is fundamentally dynamic and temporal, this structure may ideally represent the meaning, or human significance, which is embodied in man's experience of time.

In the context of contemporary culture and sensibility, this meaning is uncertain: since the turn of the century, time has been conceived

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<sup>(i)</sup> C. Lévi-Strauss, "La structure et la forme," Cahiers de l'I.S.E.A., XCIX, série M, no. 7 (March 1960), p. 3.



of as a negative property of the human condition. The collapse of faith in a meaningful universe has given rise to a metaphysic of vital disorientation which has resulted in a pessimistic evaluation of time and history.

Some authors of fiction write specifically about time; a number of these may write about the metaphysical implications of time; but only a minority succeed in creating a novel-form which incorporates an organic correspondence between a content and a structure both subordinate to the generic theme of time. This thesis purports to examine certain novelistic structures found in a small group of twentieth-century Spanish novels, and to relate them to the concepts of time defined in those works. Human experience is here accorded formal expression via a structure which emphasises the problematical nature of the contemporary response to time as an essential property of the human condition.



## INTRODUCTION

The twentieth century's Weltanschauung is characterised by an acute awareness of the philosophical question of time as an essential property of the human condition. This philosophical preoccupation is not, of course, limited to the twentieth century; it has captivated the attention of thinkers throughout history: a much quoted figure is that of St. Augustine, who expounded a systematic evaluation of the relation between past, present and future through the human vehicles of memory and expectation.<sup>1</sup> It is, however, in the twentieth century that time assumes overwhelming proportions as a question for metaphysical speculation and becomes a crucial obsession: "La conciencia crítica y sistematizadora en lo concerniente al Tiempo se agudiza en el siglo XX", remarks Raúl Castagnino.

The nature of this concern may be interpreted as a symptom of the turn taken by contemporary Western sensibility in general: it may be seen, that is, as a consciousness constructed on that metaphysic of discontent which prevails in the post-Romantic era. As Ortega y Gasset noted in a topical essay entitled El tema de nuestro tiempo (1921/2), "Poco a poco se va extendiendo por áreas cada vez más amplias de la sociedad europea un extraño fenómeno que pudiera llamarse 'desorientación vital'."<sup>3</sup> Contemporary man's conception of time is a cardinal illustration of the prevalent sense of existential crisis and world disvalue, a

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<sup>1</sup>Hans Meyerhoff makes this comment in his Time in Literature (University of California Press, 1955).

<sup>2</sup>Raúl Castagnino, Tiempo y expresión literaria (Buenos Aires: Editorial Nova, 1967), p. 15.

<sup>3</sup>Ortega y Gasset, op. cit., in Obras (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1943), II, 371.

thesis proposed by A.A. Mendilow and Frank Kermode, among many others.<sup>4</sup> We, too, choose to relate the ideas about time and history to this broader framework of a pessimistic critique of man and civilisation.

The time-obsession of the twentieth century is reflected in the work of some of its principal scientists and philosophers, Bergson, Einstein, Dunne and Heidegger. Two well-defined categories of theory may be discerned, and a division established between historical-objective and personal-subjective time. Henri Bergson's idea of cosmic durée has had a marked influence on European philosophy and has formed the basis of a theoretics of historical time supported by e.g., Whitehead and Alexander. In Matière et mémoire (1896) and Évolution créatrice (1907), Bergson expressed the view that time was the essential energy of the universe, and not just one of a number of properties. According to his dualistic philosophy, the world comprises life and matter; the former is a grand impulse opposed to the inertness of the latter. The life force's impulse to action constitutes a creative dynamic which he defines as a continuous becoming and current of energy which has formed the world through an evolutionary process. Bergson rejected the quantitative approach of science and mathematics on the grounds that it accounts for time in merely spatial terms; time, he argued, is a qualitative reality and positive flux. Continuing the Hegelian and Romantic view of life as a genetic process, he offered his theory of élan vital and cosmic duration as a glorification of Life and Ultimate Creation.

Bergson also constructed a theory of subjective time, but a more influential attitude derives from Martin Heidegger's Sein und Zeit

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<sup>4</sup>Mendilow, Time and the Novel (London: Peter Nevill, 1952). Kermode, The Sense of an Ending (Oxford University Press, 1967).



(1927). This has proved to be a key-work on the theme of time and personal experience. Locke, Hume, Kant and Berkeley had considered time to be a purely subjective condition and one of the principal categories of life; Heidegger conceives of the philosophical appraisal of the phenomenon of the world and human existence in precise and exclusive terms of time and temporality. Man's predisposition to experience a sense of time, or his temporality, is the sine qua non of his existence, so that for Heidegger, 'to be' is 'to be in time'. "Temporality is not at all anything that 'is' in the sense of a 'being'," <sup>5</sup> insists Dr. Werner Brock and Jean Pouillon accurately adds that "la temporalité n'est pas un être, mais un caractère de ce qui se temporalise." <sup>6</sup> According to Heidegger, it is basic to man's ontology and is "the transcendental horizon of the problem of Being". <sup>7</sup> In the first section of his work, the German philosopher defines man's immediate position in the world by the term Da-sein, which means, literally, "being-there". Da-sein is to be distinguished from mere "existence": it is an all-embracing concept which includes all "existentials", and is ontologic as opposed to ontic. "Human Da-sein is characterised as Being-in-the world," <sup>8</sup> concludes Dr. Brock. From this general definition, Heidegger proceeds to enumerate and analyse the specific properties ("existentials") of man's being-in-the-world. In the second section of Sein und Zeit, the author indicates that the phenomenon of the world is to be considered as grounded in temporality. All the dominant characteristics

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<sup>5</sup>Werner Brock, an introduction to Heidegger's Existence and Being (London: Vision, 1949), p. 95.

<sup>6</sup>Pouillon, Temps et monde (Paris: Gallimard, 1946), p. 156.

<sup>7</sup> and <sup>8</sup>Brock, op.cit., pp. 36 & 40.



of Da-sein gain their full significance in the ultimate reference of temporality: "the central issue of ... Being and Time is to show that, for a human being as Da-sein 'to be' is always 'to be temporal' - that the ontological meaning of Being is time."<sup>9</sup> The culmination in Heidegger's argument is the affirmation of "care" as the fundamental ontological reality, i.e., as the actual being of Da-sein. "Care" has a temporal structure which is a fusion of the conventionally labelled past, present and future: "The 'Being-in-advance-of-itself' of Care is grounded in the 'future'. The 'Already-Being-in-the-world' of care is grounded in the 'past' ... The 'Being-concerned-with-the-world-of-one's Care' is grounded in the 'present'."<sup>10</sup> Thus for Heidegger the nature and structure of being is temporal.

Heidegger and Bergson are figures of interest because their theories are symptomatic of the present century's philosophical climate: both thinkers insist on time's status in reality. Heidegger's relevance is accentuated by the fact that at the root of his metaphysics is the sense of crisis characteristic of this modern era.

Meyerhoff suggests three factors responsible for man's heightened concern with time in contemporary culture: first, the adoption of a quantitative metric of time in science, illustrated by the mechanical demands and effects made on man's socio-economic status by an expanding technology; second, the loss of faith in history as progress, engendered by the failure of historicism in the nineteenth century and substantiated

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<sup>9</sup> Michael Gelven, A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), p. 174.

<sup>10</sup> Brock, Existence and Being, pp. 94-5.

by the recognition of the fact that time could no longer be blindly considered a favourable medium for human improvement; and third, "the sharp decline or virtual collapse of the dimension of eternity" mirrored in the belief in stability which characterised the medieval world-view, in its philosophical, religious and social aspects.<sup>11</sup> William T.

Noon considers this interpretation satisfactory within its own limitations, but argues that Meyerhoff's three causes alone are not sufficient to account fully for the contemporary preoccupation with time. Expanding on Meyerhoff's third point, he asserts that there is something else besides Christianity which "introduced a positive orientation toward time in our Western consciousness". What Meyerhoff omitted from his scheme was the role played by Reason in the creation of the modern world-view; he also failed to comment on the significance of the collapse of that world-view, and on the contribution made to the same by Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. When, at the end of the nineteenth century, man came to reject the creed of scientific rationalism which had constituted a temporary revival of optimism, the process of disillusionment started by Kant was complete.

Noon, whose comments on literature are applicable to the broader framework of culture in general, thus argues that "the distortion of the time sense to which our modern literature witnesses owes as much to loss of confidence in reason, in idea, as it does to lack of nerve in our faith."<sup>12</sup> We, too, believe that the contemporary obsession with time is a symptom of that negative evaluation of objectively accepted rational

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<sup>11</sup> Meyerhoff, Time in Literature, pp. 87-94.

<sup>12</sup> Noon, "Modern Literature and the Sense of Time," in Philip Stevick's The Theory of the Novel (New York: Free Press, 1967), pp.293-4.



criteria which has rendered untenable any secular belief in time as a reasonable, beneficial and dependable property of human life and the world. Time is a fundamental aspect of personal and collective existence: it is inextricably related to the critical problems of person-ality, essence, continuity and purpose. Since Kant and Hobbes undermined the traditional Western world view and gave rise to a mood of philosophical insecurity which is reflected, for example, in the works of Nietzsche and Kierkegaard, these crucial issues have become problematic dilemmas. A hierarchy of values has collapsed and the modern era is characterised by "a frantic quest for something to replace the old certainties".<sup>13</sup> It is this spirit of crisis which is at the basis of the contemporary preoccupation with time.

The doctrine of Universal, Objective, or Transcendent Reason was proposed by Socrates. Ortega y Gasset affirmed that "Sócrates es el primero en darse cuenta de que la razón es un nuevo universo, más perfecto y superior al que espontáneamente hallamos en torno nuestro."<sup>14</sup> Reason, conceived of as universal insight, was held to be a comprehensive system whereby man and the cosmos were integrated in a beneficial, meaningful and harmonious relationship. "The philosophical system of Objective Reason implied the condition that an all-embracing or fundamental structure of being could be discovered and a conception of human destination derived from it."<sup>15</sup> The unifying force behind the developing world-view

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<sup>13</sup>Mendilow, Time and the Novel, p. 7.

<sup>14</sup>Ortega y Gasset, El tema de nuestro tiempo, cited, pp. 856-7.

<sup>15</sup>Max Horkheimer, Eclipse of Reason (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 12.



was exactly this Reason, as Northrop Frye indicates in his critique of contemporary culture. Referring to the basic elements of any single Weltanschauung as a cultural "mythology", he affirms that a major principle of the traditional mythology of the West was "the correspondence of human reason with the design and purpose in nature which it perceives..."<sup>16</sup> Traditionally, the theory of Objective Reason had an ethical dimension, according to which it focussed on "the idea of the greatest good, on the problem of human destiny, and on the way of realization of ultimate goals."<sup>17</sup> This concept of a beneficial Mind at work in the world fostered and maintained the philosophical, religious, social and political stability of the traditional Western world, and was in turn sustained and illustrated by them. The undermining of this stability was of a piece with the birth of the modern world. Kant displaced the foundation-stone of Western culture which Socrates had laid, thereby preparing the way for a new, modern response to reality. "El hombre antiguo," Ortega remarks, "parte de un sentimiento de confianza hacia el mundo, que es para él, de antemano, un Cosmos, un Orden. El moderno parte de la desconfianza, de la suspicacia, porque - Kant tuvo la genialidad de confesarlo con todo rigor científico - el mundo es para él un Caos, un Desorden."<sup>18</sup> For Lionel Trilling, the "modern" era starts at the end of the eighteenth century;<sup>19</sup> in Northrop Frye's opinion, the traditional mythology was still standing in that century and was only supplanted in

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<sup>16</sup>Northrop Frye, The Modern Century (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 109-110.

<sup>17</sup>Horkheimer, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>18</sup>Ortega y Gasset, "Kant: Reflexiones de Centenario," Obras, II, 951.

<sup>19</sup>Lionel Trilling, Beyond Culture. Essays on Literature and Learning (London: Secker and Warburg, 1966), p. xiii.

effect by the modern when Charles Darwin published his conclusions about man and nature: "The modern movement, properly speaking, began when Darwin finally shattered the old teleological conception of nature as reflecting an intelligent purpose."<sup>20</sup> Robbe-Grillet, too, attests the survival of positive concepts in the first half of the nineteenth century: "quelques certitudes importantes avaient cours: la confiance en particulier dans une logique des choses juste et universelle,"<sup>21</sup> certainties derived from the optimistic creeds of historicism, positivism and scientific rationalism. Sherman Eoff also refers to the mid-nineteenth century as "a dividing line between an old world and a new one". "To visualize the general course of development embracing both sides of this line, we may say that in the past two centuries man's outlook has undergone a gradual change from faith in a world order under divine control to a world order under human control, with man's consequent loneliness - not to say hopelessness - in a role that he did not ask for." Eoff adds that "the eighteenth century outlook inherited from Descartes and Newton was mechanistic but orderly, meaningful and optimistic."<sup>22</sup> The new world sees the substitution of Cartesian dualism and world mechanism by the monism of, for example, Spinoza and Naturalism. The fusion of Mind and Matter implies, for Eoff, the confusion of Reason and Instinct. Darwin may be seen to illustrate this in his reflection of the metaphysical concept of evolution as a blind sequence of events: the traditional idea of a discriminating Mind at work disappears in Darwin's system and is replaced by an irrational force to which reasonable, rational consciousness is something quite alien.

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<sup>20</sup>Frye, The Modern Century, p. 110.

<sup>21</sup>A. Robbe-Grillet, Pour un nouveau roman (Paris: Gallimard 1963), p. 37.

<sup>22</sup>Sherman Eoff, The Modern Spanish Novel (New York: University Press, 1961), p. 3.



The twentieth century bears the full weight of the modern cultural spirit established, in revolutionary fashion, in the second half of the nineteenth century. Especially prominent is the recognition of the obsolescence of the principle of World Reason. "Nous ne croyons plus aux significations figées toute faites que librait à l'homme l'ancien ordre divin, et à sa suite l'ordre rationaliste du XIX siècle," states Robbe-Grillet.<sup>23</sup> René Albérès remarks in alarming, yet explicit fashion that "ce siècle, à 60 ans, est privé de doctrines ... Sa mère mourut en lui donnant naissance: en 1900 la Raison Universelle qui avait protégé les siècles précédents cessait de représenter le rôle maternel des idées et des arts."<sup>24</sup> Huizinga comments on the displacement of Reason (that is, Mind imbued with ethical sense) by Intelligence (Pure Intellect): "Reason in its old form, wedded as it is to Aristotelian logic, can no longer keep up with science."<sup>25</sup> There no longer prevails that "belief in the world's rationality and in man's ability to penetrate its secrets" which Georg Lukács emphasises as a necessary requirement for a positive human perspective of life.<sup>26</sup> Existentialism, the strongly established mode of thought born of the twentieth century's anguish-stricken consciousness, "exhibits the pain that accompanies the exercise of reason in a world order where reason seems incidental rather than supreme".<sup>27</sup> This philosophical system represents the fundamental

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<sup>23</sup>Robbe-Grillet, op.cit., p. 152.

<sup>24</sup>Albérès, L'Aventure intellectuelle du XXe siècle (Paris: Albin Michel, 1969), p. 45.

<sup>25</sup>J. Huizinga, In the Shadow of Tomorrow (London: Heinemann, 1936), p. 45.

<sup>26</sup>Lukács, The Meaning of Contemporary Realism (London: Merlin Press, 1962), p. 43.

<sup>27</sup>Eoff, The Modern Spanish Novel, p. 13.



psychological and spiritual attitude of the twentieth-century European Weltanschauung in general: the basic premise is the disintegration of world values and the impotence of reason. No longer can it be said that the world embodies a principle of purposeful, beneficial order.

The evaluation of time and history is an essential element of a cultural system. In the Cartesian and Newtonian outlook, time and history were fundamentally stable properties and positive values in a universe which was under the complete control of a benevolent and omniscient God. In such an objective system, teleology, with all its promising ethical connotations, was an a priori implication. "The emphasis was on the ends rather than on means,"<sup>28</sup> the principal concerns being the problem of human destiny and the realization of ultimate goals. The objective system had a prescribed "sense of an ending":<sup>29</sup> stability and goodness, in immanent terms, God and beatitude in a perspective of transcendence. But, as George Poulet and Stephen Toulmin have indicated, the fixed order of the mechanistic universe, of the seventeenth century, for example, implied a static, and therefore limited, conception of time.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, the notion of history as something developmental and dynamic, which contemporary culture enjoys, is the consequence of a profound revolution in man's attitude to time, which only crystallised in the nineteenth century with the establishing of the theory of evolution. Kant had, in fact, suggested that cosmic history was evolutionary in his The General History of Nature and Theory of the Heavens (1755), but it

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<sup>28</sup> Horkheimer, Eclipse of Reason, p. 5.

<sup>29</sup> The title phrase of Kermode's book, cited, note 4.

<sup>30</sup> Poulet, Studies in Human Time (Edinburgh: University Press, 1949).

was only in the course of the nineteenth century that a dynamic world-picture was systematically presented with the appearance of a general consensus. Toulmin remarks that "since 1800, the discovery of unlimited time has fractured the foundations of earlier world-views even more irreparably than the earlier discovery of unbounded space. Bit by bit, the static framework of the natural world ... has been dismantled."<sup>31</sup> However, in the process of expanding scientific knowledge the Darwinian theory struck a disarming blow at the fundamental tenets of the traditional world-view, for it contradicted the principle of a Universal Mind at work in the realization of intelligent and beneficial purpose. In this it undermined the principle of World Reason which had traditionally prevailed. It also conflicted with Hegel's historicist doctrine of spiritual evolution which, even at the beginning of the nineteenth century, was an expression of human trust in "the unfolding excellence of fact".<sup>32</sup> "The Darwinian theory," Toulmin states, "called in question all teleological interpretations of the History of Nature, theistic and naturalistic alike."<sup>33</sup> According to this theory, reason becomes purely an organ, and evolution is reduced to a blind sequence of natural events in chance mutation. As a consequence, Darwinism emphasised means and refused to accord ends/purposes the consideration that Objective Reason or Hegelianism had lent them. It has thus contributed to a philosophy of eternal transition, of perpetual means without end; "the fiction of

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<sup>31</sup>Stephen Toulmin and June Goodfield, The Discovery of Time (Pelican, 1967), p. 327.

<sup>32</sup>George Steiner, In Bluebeard's Castle (London: Faber and Faber, 1971), p. 16.

<sup>33</sup>Toulmin, op.cit., p. 278.



transition," in Kermode's opinion, "reflects our lack of confidence in ends."<sup>34</sup> Time and history without purpose or control are time and history without meaning, and negative, questionable values.

So, the principle of Reason which underlay the concepts of transcendence and historical meliorism was radically undermined by the modern conception of time. Implicit in the loss of faith in Christianity (Meyerhoff's third cause) and in the decline of a belief in history as meaningful progress is the collapse of confidence in World Reason. The resultant view of time and history remains permeated with a sense of crisis and spiritual disorientation. Attempts have been made at countering this negative view of time. One significant theory stands out as a creed of purposive human value: Marxism, adapted from Hegel's principle of dialectical spiritual evolution, has to a great extent replaced or reinforced Christianity by secularizing the latter's traditional belief in time as a rectilinear progression of a positive, teleological structure. But Marxism, whilst reasserting teleology, is constructed around the idea of radical social change produced by the class struggle. It substitutes the forceful imposition of proletarian power for an organic process of developing class synthesis and it, also, lies open to the criticism of being an extremist abandonment of the rational order of man. Another potentially promising theory has failed: Ortega y Gasset voiced the need for a historical Razón Vital, a unitary creative consciousness which would further human social and political well-being. His proposition, however, was a naive, historicist view which, in an era of sophisticated thought, never achieved the wide

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<sup>34</sup>Kermode, The Sense of an Ending, pp. 100-1.

approval and acceptance necessary to convert it into a positive creed. Father Teilhard de Chardin's science of "anthropogenesis", his "science of the unfolding of humanity",<sup>35</sup> relies on a fiction of mystical development similar to, and as questionable as, Ortega's historicism.

The prevalent philosophies of cosmic time have emphasised, with overwhelming coherence, the futility and enigma of human existence and history. Schopenhauer's vision of a Life-Force which is material, unconscious and irrational is fraught with sinister and pessimistic overtones: purposeless and relentless, it is a gloomy imposition of inevitability. Bergson's cosmic duration, though proposed as a creed of creative advance, can justifiably be considered restless and futile activity analogous to Schopenhauer's Will, for, as G.W. Cunningham intelligently objects, "duration is a meaningless conception unless consciousness admittedly possesses a forward-reaching aspect which gives to it its unity and continuity." Bergson does in fact deny that "a teleological explanation of the world process is permissible"<sup>36</sup> and thereby radically weakens his theory. The revived interest in the theory of cyclical time is a symptom of the same pessimism and lack of faith in universal meaning. This belief, traditionally held by the Greeks, was reintroduced into Western thought by Vico and more emphatically by Nietzsche. It has been adopted by writers and thinkers like Danilevski, Spengler, Toynbee, Yeats and Azorín. The theory is of ambiguous value. In one optimistic respect, it seems to ensure both temporal continuity and permanence, and to offer a solution to the

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<sup>35</sup>Mariano Picón Salas, The Ignoble Savages (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), p. 168.

<sup>36</sup>Cunningham, The Philosophy of Bergson (New York: Longman's, Green & Co., 1916), pp. 126 & 133.



problem of finality and individual transcendence, facts which possibly explain its appeal in an age of declining faith in Christian eternity. In another respect, it can be a nightmarish metaphor of world futility, advocating, as it does, eternal recurrence and monotonous repetition. The theory of eternal return contradicts Western thought's fundamental axiom of progress and may justifiably earn the description accorded it by Karl Löwith: "a stumbling block and foolishness to modern man".<sup>37</sup>

The twentieth century's great achievement in physical theory, Relativity, has as a basic premise, the curve of time and by definition refutes the traditional criterion of the absolute value. Albert Einstein belonged to a generation of natural philosophers for whom "the unchanging 'laws of nature' that had been the glory of classical physics could no longer play a single, unambiguous part within a 'God's eye view' of nature. From now on, the intellectual apparatus of physical theory must be applied to the real world in a way that was essentially dependent on, or 'relative to', the particular observation system selected."<sup>38</sup>

Pierre Astier, in his panoramic study of the twentieth century novel in France, refers to the overwhelming influence and importance of Einstein's thought along with that of Planck, Bergson and Freud at the turn of the century: these four "propagent maintenant la ruine des traditionnelles conceptions du temps et de l'espace, de la notion de vérité absolue, de la confiance en la raison, de la croyance en l'accès de l'intelligence claire à tous les problèmes de la vie humaine et naturelle."<sup>39</sup> Max

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<sup>37</sup> Löwith, "Nietzsche's Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence," Journal of the History of Ideas, VI, 3 (June 1945), 274.

<sup>38</sup> Toulmin, "Struggle of the Master Scientists," The Observer, Colour Supplement, 21-11-71.

<sup>39</sup> Astier, La crise du roman français et le nouveau réalisme (Paris: Nouvelles Ed. Debrasse, 1968), p. 34.

Planck's quantum theory, a complement to Relativity, was a momentous contribution to the purely scientific interest in objective time. Hitherto, science had argued for a uniformity of physical time by dividing it into formalized units of consistent quantity. Planck put forward the theory that there was no such absolute consistency to time, contesting that physical phenomena are possibly discontinuous: "La energía ... no es una magnitud continua como se creía hasta Planck, sino que varía a saltos y parece estar compuesto, por tanto, de unidades indivisibles."<sup>40</sup> Karl and Magalaner draw attention to the far-reaching significance of Planck's discovery: "The new physics, as demonstrated in part by Planck's quantum theory (1900), merely fortified man's new role by shattering cause and effect (the basis of any rational view of the universe) and by emphasising discontinuity and the seemingly irrational."<sup>41</sup> Such a theory, along with the others enumerated in this brief conspectus, could not help but contribute to a sense of instability essential to the collapse of faith in absolute values.

The interest in history, or macro-cosmic time, is complemented by a similarly precise concern, in contemporary philosophy, for the role of the individual and his ability to experience time in purely personal terms. The modern insistence on the subjective experience of time stems from Kant's transcendental aesthetic which conceives of time as purely an a priori subjective condition. Although disputing certain points of the Kantian theory, Jean-Marie Guyau represents, in general principle, the late nineteenth century creed of subjectivism, as do

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<sup>40</sup>Raimundo Panikker, "Max Planck (1858-1947)," Arbor, 24 (nov.-dic. 1947), p. 387.

<sup>41</sup>Frederick Karl & Marvin Magalaner, Great 20th Century English Novels (London, 1959), p. 32.



Henri Bergson and William James. Bergson conceives of time as being related primarily to the consciousness, whose role it is to experience, via intuition, the qualitative essence of duration: "la durée toute pure est la forme que prend la succession de nos états de conscience quand notre moi se laisse vivre."<sup>42</sup> Duration and memory are co-extensive in the human consciousness and together provide for the continuity and permanence of the past in the subject's own psychological time-scheme. In addition to this account of the physico-psychic experience of subjective time is an ontological critique of the human condition, the perspective generally adopted by Existentialism. The source of this approach is Søren Kierkegaard's analysis of the human being's situation and relation to destiny. "Existence," for the Danish philosopher, "is temporality, continuous becoming, a task",<sup>43</sup> and at the core of this struggle is the individual's passionate self-will. Kierkegaard, according to a perspective he shares with Husserl, Heidegger, and Sartre, conceives of man as being in time. For Sartre, "la temporalité n'est pas. Seul un être d'une certaine structure d'être peut être temporel dans l'unité de son être ... La temporalité n'est pas, mais le Pour-soi se temporalise en existant"; so, "le temps de la conscience, c'est la réalité humaine qui se temporalise comme totalité qui est à elle même son propre inachèvement."<sup>44</sup> Existentialist time is a human creation constructed around critical decisions. It is

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<sup>42</sup>Bergson, Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1908), p. 76.

<sup>43</sup>Jean Wahl, Philosophies of Existence (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), p. 31.

<sup>44</sup>J.-P. Sartre, L'Être et le néant (Paris: Gallimard, 1943), pp. 180 and 196.

"a faring forward irreversibly into a virgin future from ecstasy to ecstasy",<sup>45</sup> and the immanent structure of personal conscious being.

This philosophical conception of the individual's relation to time springs from the metaphysic of uncertainty which is characteristic of contemporary culture. It implies instability and futility, and is a direct reflection of that spiritual deprivation of absolute values which underlies the modern attitude to man's position in the world. Nicolay Berdyaev refers to Heidegger's central and representative position in contemporary ideology and sensibility: "The Godlessness of Heidegger's philosophy, which is very characteristic of the present day, lies in the fact that from its point of view the present condition of being and the anxiety that belongs to it are unconquerable."<sup>46</sup> This anxiety is enhanced, to a great extent, by the inability of the Existentialist creed to satisfy the eschatological demand. For the criterion of purpose historically central to Western ideology is never accompanied by a notion of satisfactory fulfilment: teleology is relativised. Of Sartre, Kermode states that "his is a philosophy of crisis, but his world has no beginning and no end."<sup>47</sup> Central to Kierkegaard's thought is the idea of possibility, which for him is related to the problem of faith: "lo posible corresponde en todo a lo futuro. Lo posible es lo futuro para la libertad, y lo futuro lo posible para el tiempo. A ambos," the Danish philosopher concludes, "responde en la vida individual la angustia."<sup>48</sup> But this advocacy of an open future

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<sup>45</sup>Kermode, The Sense of an Ending, p. 139.

<sup>46</sup>Berdyaev, The Beginning and the End (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1952), p. 212.

<sup>47</sup>Kermode, op.cit., p. 133.

<sup>48</sup>Kierkegaard, El concepto de la angustia, 7th edition (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1967), p. 91.



reduces human existence to an eternal, alarming incognito where values can only be immanent. Such a value is the "project", which implies the freedom advocated by Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Sartre as the "pour soi's" patrimony. Like Schopenhauer's continual becoming, the Existentialists' possibility is endless, i.e. end-less; it is a heroic attempt at self-transcendence which only succeeds in replacing fulfillment by potential. To this extent, this philosophy is one of perpetual transition which promotes means, not ends: reasonable meaning is absent in this explanation of the world and human destiny.

Kierkegaard, Sartre, Husserl and Heidegger represent what Horkheimer refers to as the displacement of Objective Reason by subjective reason. The lack of any transcendental value perforce results in the plurality of subjectivities. "The universe has proliferated into a multiverse"<sup>49</sup> and the absolute has disappeared in the face of multiple relativism; muthos has supplanted logos, in Huizinga's terminology,<sup>50</sup> or, to adopt Unamuno's expression, unified collective Reason has been outweighed by fragmented individual truths: "la razón es social ..., la razón nos une y las verdades nos separan."<sup>51</sup> The Existentialists' insistence on individual truth, freedom and responsibility heightens the need for a sound faculty of substantive reason: but, "it is difficult to enthrone reason on high when contingency runs rampant."<sup>52</sup> Hence the contemporary emphasis on the absurdity of human

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<sup>49</sup>Mendilow, Time and the Novel, p. 7.

<sup>50</sup>Huizinga, In the Shadow of Tomorrow, p. 195.

<sup>51</sup>Unamuno, Como se hace una novela in Obras completas (Madrid: Afrodisio Aguado, 1958), X, 873.

<sup>52</sup>Eoff, The Modern Spanish Novel, p. 13.

existence and Existentialism's basic premise of man's divorce from the now mythical logic of the cosmos. That school's attitude to time is a reflection of its ontology of unmitigated crisis.

The prevalent conceptions of time, as illustrated in the most prominent philosophies of the century, may subsequently be regarded as a united expression of the mood of spiritual disorientation which permeates contemporary culture.



The intellectual atmosphere of Spain at the turn of the century was characterised by an ever-growing recognition of contemporary existential sensibility and by an anguished response to a situation which confronted man with a stark absence of absolute ideals. The role of diagnosing the symptoms of modern crisis was assumed by an intellectual minority who constituted the Generation of 1898. These individuals approached the deep-seated problem from a variety of standpoints, including the economic, the political and the social, but their central preoccupation was with the philosophico-cultural state of the Spain in which they had matured. Their active scepticism led these men into the realms of metaphysical speculation about Ultimate Truth and the essence of reality, thus bringing them into line with the dominant traits of critical thought in fin de siglo Europe. Their comprehensive philosophical survey made the Generation of '98 the first cohesive intellectual body in twentieth century Europe to analyse systematically contemporary malaise.

Unamuno, Baroja and Azorín were competent men of letters well-acquainted with modern philosophy and science, including the works of those figures who made an overwhelming contribution to the modern sense of crisis: Kant, Kierkegaard, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Darwin and Marx. In his retrospective "Final del siglo XIX y principios del XX." Baroja described the cultural climate of that era. The principal characteristic of its psychology was its lack of ideas madres, those purposive ideals which should form a coherent framework of values and whose absence may produce a profound sense of cultural unbalance. "El optimismo del siglo XIX," wrote Baroja, "formado a base del culto de

la ciencia, de la libertad, del progreso, de la fraternidad de los pueblos, se vino también abajo por la teoría de hombres ilustres poco políticos, como Schopenhauer, Ibsen, Dostoyevski, y Tolstoi." He referred also to specific figures whose ideas had contributed especially to the sense of crisis: "Entre Marx y Nietzsche han oscilado las corrientes del final del siglo XIX y principio del XX."<sup>53</sup> To this list Azorín added the name of Schopenhauer, and Unamuno those of Kierkegaard and Darwin.<sup>54</sup> Baroja expressly referred, also, to the roots of the malaise, tracing the trend of sensibility back to Kant, the causa prima of the loss of confidence in World Reason: "Después de Kant, el mundo es ciego; ya no puede haber ni libertad ni justicia, sino fuerzas que obran por un principio de causalidad en los dominios del espacio y del tiempo ... Kant ha sido el gran destructor de la mentira greco-semítica."<sup>55</sup> It was in graphic language such as this that Baroja and his fellow noventayochistas attested the lack of absolute cultural values in Spain, and, indeed, in Europe as a whole, at the turn of the century. Included in the philosophical survey carried out by these thinkers was an evaluation of time and history, and a detailed concern with the problems of the essence and direction of objective and subjective time.

Time was recognised in part as a subjective category, according to idealist philosophy after Locke, Hume and Kant: "la idea del espacio y del tiempo son necesidades de nuestro espíritu, pero que no tienen realidad," states Andrés Hurtado in Baroja's El árbol de la ciencia.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Baroja, op. cit., Obras completas (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 1948), VII, 688-9.

<sup>54</sup>See Unamuno's "Darwin" (1901), in Obras completas, X, 95-7.

<sup>55</sup>bis. Baroja, Obras completas, II, 508.



Antonio Machado was perhaps the member of the '98 most interested in, and most competent to discuss, the problem of subjective time. In an article written in 1915, he declared that "Tiempo y espacio como pseudo-representaciones, es decir, como hechos de conciencia sin objeto exterior, son privilegio de los más altos grados de conciencia, goces sobre los cuales gira el pensamiento, y merced al cual tiene éste la necesaria independencia para poder actuar sobre las cosas."<sup>56</sup> Machado also considered time from the stand-point of ontology, thereby foreshadowing the tendency which Heidegger and Sartre would systematically adopt. "En cuanto nuestra vida coincide con nuestra conciencia," Machado wrote, "es el tiempo la realidad última, rebelde al conjuro de la lógica, irreducible, inevitable, fatal. Vivir es devorar tiempo: esperar; y por muy trascendente que quiera ser nuestra espera, siempre será espera de seguir esperando."<sup>57</sup> The Spanish poet-philosopher was in fact expressing the principle that "to be" is "to be in time", a prime tenet of Existentialist theory.<sup>58</sup>

Unamuno emphasised the individual's experience of time as the essence of human existence: "Lo que determina a un hombre, lo que le hace un hombre, uno y no otro, el que es y no el que no es, es un principio de unidad y un principio de continuidad ... en el tiempo." Furthermore, for Unamuno the essence of life and human temporality was inseparable from the eschatological debate, or what George Steiner

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<sup>56</sup> Antonio Machado, "Heterogeneidad del ser. Apuntes para una teoría del conocimiento. Espacio y tiempo," in Obras completas (Madrid: Plenitud, 1951), p. 1217.

<sup>57</sup> Machado, 'Juan de Mairena,' in Obras completas, p. 1012.

<sup>58</sup> See Sánchez Barbudo's interesting study of parallels between Machado and Heidegger in Estudios Sobre Galdós, Unamuno y Machado (Madrid: Guadarrama, 1968), pp. 293-418.

has termed "the trope of transcendence".<sup>59</sup> "El mundo es para la conciencia. O, mejor dicho, este para, esta noción de finalidad, y mejor que noción sentimiento, este sentimiento teleológico no nace sino donde hay conciencia. Conciencia y finalidad son la misma cosa en el fondo." From this fact, Unamuno derived his most personal "sentimiento trágico de la vida" characterised by "el ansia de no morir, el hambre de inmortalidad personal" and "el conato con que tendemos a persistir indefinidamente en nuestro ser propio".<sup>60</sup> The cry for immortality uttered in 1898 by Ganivet in El escultor de su alma was voiced in equally vehement terms by the tragic Unamuno for whom a personal sense of temporality was the source of existential anxiety.

Yet he succeeded in finding a possible solution to the metaphysical problem of finality and personal transcendence through a technique of quasi-mystical contemplación. Foreshadowing Valle-Inclán's esoteric, orientally inspired aesthetic of quietism,<sup>61</sup> Unamuno upheld the human mind's ability to transcend and abolish the mathematical, quantitative divisions of time and reach a state of identification with the essential self. In this way, the contemplative mind could extend its esemplastic powers of intuition over the whole of the individual's consciousness and convert that experience into permanent, eternally

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<sup>59</sup>Steiner, In Bluebeard's Castle, p. 87.

<sup>60</sup>Unamuno, Del sentimiento trágico de la vida, in Obras completas, XVI, 134, 9 and 163.

<sup>61</sup>See Ciriaco M. Arroyo's "La lámpara maravillosa y la ecuación estética," in Ramón del Valle-Inclán, An Appraisal of his Life and Works, ed. Zahareas (New York: Las Americas, 1968), pp. 443-59. The concept of static time is central to this work by Valle-Inclán.



present substance. Unamuno also applied this theory to the objective world and derived a historical system whose nucleus was the concept of intrahistoria. According to this creed, Spirit and Matter are one, as in the Spinozan and Hegelian monistic philosophies. Timelessness, permanence and substantial essence here prevail in opposition to the destructive chronology, the transience and the appential existence of history. This theory offered a provisional solution to the metaphysical issues of human personality and finality. Confronted with the dilemma of relentlessly corrosive cosmic and historical time, Unamuno resorted to an emotionally satisfying counter-theory, knowing, perhaps, that "the riddle of history lay in desire not logic."<sup>62</sup> A more detailed treatment of the topic of intrahistoria is given in part I chapter I of this thesis.

Azorín's conception of objective time, which he derived from his readings of Schopenhauer, Taine and Nietzsche, was permeated with melancholy and anguish. As a dialectical, linear or as a cyclical process, history was a motive for an all-pervasive human discontent: Yuste, in La voluntad, repeats the Schopenhauerian view of history as "la evolución de los mundos hacia la Nada". Azorín's interpretation of the Nietzschean creed of Eternal Return involves an equally pessimistic critique of civilisation and time: any positive hope originally embodied in Nietzsche's theory of a process of refinement is replaced by Azorín's desolate vision of life and history as purposeless gyre and déjà vu. The reader is referred to part I chapter II of this study

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<sup>62</sup>Peter Earle, "Unamuno: historia and intrahistoria," in Bleiberg and Fox's Spanish Thought and Letters in the Twentieth Century. (Nashville, Tennessee: Vanderbilt Univ. Press, 1966), p. 185.

for fuller comment on this theme.

Ortega y Gasset, whose dedication to the subject of history is attested by a number of articles on the theme,<sup>63</sup> expounded a personal theory of historical World Reason, "la Razón Vital". Although it offered an optimistic and challenging perspective of future civilization, this theory nevertheless failed to establish itself as a practical view of history in an era of sophisticated thought on the subject. Ortega's system, relying as it did on the presupposition of an epiphenomenal force or élan of evolution, may be included in the category of historicist hypotheses which Karl Popper has refuted so convincingly. That persuasive author's argument in The Poverty of Historicism is to reject as a naive fiction the metaphor of a developing Cosmic Mind which is the dynamic realization of an a priori blueprint of historical teleology. Popper might have included the name of Ortega alongside those of Comte, Mill and Marx as representative of that naive or impoverished historical view. Ortega's more fruitful role appears to have been that of commenting on the current European trends of historical thought or discussing various aspects of contemporary culture. His "El sentido histórico de la teoría de Einstein"<sup>64</sup> was a notable contribution to a debate of European scope, and he referred to Heidegger's Sein und Zeit only one year after it was published in Germany, albeit only in a footnote at the end of an article entitled "La filosofía de

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<sup>63</sup>See, for example, Ortega's "El sentido histórico," in 'Las Atlántidas,' Obras completas, pp. 937-43 and "La interpretación bélica de la historia," Obras, pp. 556-66.

<sup>64</sup>This essay formed part of the already cited El tema de nuestro tiempo.



la historia de Hegel y la historiología " (1928).<sup>65</sup>

Eugenio d'Ors was a contemporary of Ortega's who contributed notably to the intellectual debates of the period. His writings display an interest in the problem of time and history as keen and exhaustive as that of any of his contemporaries. D'Ors' principal concern was with refuting historicism and the topical doctrine of entropy, which prompted his Els fenòmens irreversibles è la concepció entròpica del univers. In his doctoral thesis "Las aporías de Zenón de Elea y la noción moderna del espacio-tiempo", he discussed Relativity and displayed his adherence to Minkowski's interpretation. D'Ors was also to profess firm belief in the doctrine of cyclical time, about which he lectured at a conference in Lisbon in 1919. In this paper, "La concepción cíclica del universo", he argued for the recognition of a system of natural rhythms within the successive structure of history, an argument inspired in the works of Plato, Vico and Nietzsche. Whilst adopting an outlook of abstraction and philosophical serenity like Ortega's, d'Ors was conversant with the radical innovations in the Western system of values and ideas and contributed decisively to the culturally enlightened atmosphere which Spain enjoyed in the first third of the twentieth century.

It can be seen, then, that the leading Spanish intellectuals of that period paid special attention to concepts of subjective and objective time and perceived them in relation to the broad cultural framework of crisis whose nucleus was the collapse of human faith in

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<sup>65</sup>Included in Goethe desde dentro, Obras, pp. 1504-22.

World Reason. In the troubled years which immediately preceded the Civil War, writers and thinkers alike continued to foster a close interest in the subject. The work of the authors already mentioned was supplemented by a number of articles and studies which appeared in learned journals like the Revista de Occidente (first series, 1923-36) and Cruz y Raya (1933-36). The writings of many leading European men of letters were made accessible to interested Spaniards in the form of translations. H. Spangenberg's "Los períodos de la historia universal" appeared in 1925 and was followed by Max Scheler's "La idea del hombre y la historia" (1926), "El porvenir del hombre" (1927) and "El puesto del hombre en el cosmos" (1929).<sup>66</sup> Spanish contributions included Blas Cabrera's "La imagen actual del universo según la relatividad" (1931), in which the author discussed a theme already treated by Ortega and the subject of an editorial comment "La nueva teoría de Einstein" (1929).<sup>67</sup> The reviews played an important part in the propagation of current intellectual material at a time when socio-political disruption was seriously affecting all domestic affairs in Spain.

When the civil strife abated and at least the semblance of cultural stability returned, Spanish men of letters of the early '40s found their attention drawn once more to the central topos of time. Julián Marías continued to expound the theory of historical generations which the author of La España Invertebrada had sought to promote. Spanish thinkers of this period seemed, however, to be more

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<sup>66</sup>Revista de Occidente, X, 192 and 330, XIV, 137, XVII, 129 and XXV, 1.

<sup>67</sup>Id. XXXIII, 36, and XXIII, 255.



concerned with the theoretics of subjective temporal experience than with the problem of historical reality. The ontological perspective, previously embraced by Unamuno and Machado and put forward systematically on a European scale by Heidegger, was now widely professed by the intellectual minority in Spain. Ortega y Gasset, 56 years old at the end of the war, and no longer resident in Spain, considered the problem of man's temporality from a standpoint of ontology in keeping with Heidegger's. In an article written in 1934-5 and published by Revista de Occidente in 1941, he emphasised "la mudanza de todo lo humano", and remarked that this fact should not be lamented, in lamartinian fashion, for example, because "es precisamente nuestro privilegio ontológico." In the process of life, "El hombre 'va siendo' y desiendo - viviendo. Va acumulando ser - el pasado ... El hombre es lo que ha pasado, lo que ha hecho ... Progresar es acumular ser."<sup>68</sup>

Amongst the younger generation, Xavier Zubiri, José Gaos and José Ferrater Mora made a concerted contribution on behalf of Spanish letters to the general ideological tendencies prevalent in Europe. The influence of Heidegger is again notable. In 1941 Julián Marías thought it necessary to include an extensive chapter on the German philosopher in his Historia de la filosofía. Zubiri had already published "¿Qué es metafísica?", a translation of one of Heidegger's works, in 1933, and an analysis of the work of Husserl, Scheler and Heidegger entitled Filosofía y metafísica in 1936.<sup>69</sup> José Gaos, in his Dos exclusivas del hombre: la mano y el tiempo (1945), was recognisably influenced by the

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<sup>68</sup> Ortega y Gasset, Historia como sistema (Madrid: Rev. de Occidente, 3rd edition, 1958), pp. 50-3.

<sup>69</sup> Both in Cruz y Raya, vols. VI (1933), 83-115 and XXX (1936), 7-60.

German philosopher, whose Sein und Zeit he eventually translated into Spanish in 1951. Similarly, Ferrater Mora owes much to Unamuno and Heidegger and makes detailed allusion to these figures and Simmel, Jaspers and Sartre in his El ser y la muerte: bosquejo de una filosofía integracionista.

Junior to José Gaos and Ferrater Mora by 24 and 12 years respectively, Luis Martín Santos, a philosophically-oriented psychiatrist and novelist, made a thorough exposition of Heidegger's work in an essay entitled "La psiquiatría existencial" (1960), followed by the publication, in 1964, of Libertad, temporalidad y transferencia en el psicoanálisis existencial. Although Martín Santos was well-informed of the philosophical implications of ontology, he attempted to construct a psycho-analytical theory based on the premise of the temporal essence of human personality. Shunning the abstract notion of Being, he intended to "desbrozar las posibilidades de una Psiquiatría edificada sobre los resultados de la analítica del Dasein," on the results, that is, derived from Heidegger's theoretic. This would include considerations on the problems of "el ser-relativamente-a-la-muerte y el estado-de-resuelto". "Estas variantes," he added, like the concept of angst, "no son ajenos a la Psiquiatría." Martín Santos' selective critique of Heidegger's work involves an explicit rejection of "toda opinión metafísica, religiosa o antropológica",<sup>70</sup> but is nevertheless a detailed expression of the theme of life's temporal structure and essence.

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<sup>70</sup>Luis Martín Santos, Apólogos y otras prosas inéditas, ed. y prólogo de Salvador Clotas (Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1970), pp. 133 & 119.



An attempt at producing an ordered and synthetic exposition of the theme of time and existence is embodied in a recent essay by Juan Benet. Primarily a novelist, in whom traces of Faulknerian idea and technique are visible, Benet has also written on extra-literary topics. "Un extempore " (1969) is an emotionally neutral and philosophically probing discussion of that problematic triad, life, death and time. For Benet, time, a great abstraction, may be symbolically represented by an image of "una espiral de papel blanco" which moves mechanically onwards, regardless of the eventful messages imprinted on it. "Nuestro tiempo," he comments, "tiene una composición en cierto modo semejante: una máquina permanentemente conectada a la red, un cúmulo de espirales en blanco que constituyen su producción habitual y una discreta y selecta serie de impresiones que, a pesar de su escasez y de la desproporción medida en masa de papel (tiempo) gastado, representan el único fin de su existencia." Man's life is a count-down (cf. "una cuenta al revés") and an exchange of potential time for experience: "Y así el hombre - que tiene en su haber su tiempo, que no se lo debe a nadie, y que no le es dado por nadie - tiene que pagar con él por su apetito de vivir." From these considerations, Benet derives his definition that "el hombre es una máquina de transformar tiempo en existencia." Time 'is' not until it has been realised by experience. Memory plays a fundamental role in human psychology, but it is an agent of destruction and oppression: "La memoria devora a la existencia ... La existencia - la transformación de tiempo en existencia - resulta ser una lucha constante contra la memoria, un intento de romper su cerco, una esperanza de volver a encontrar nuevas fórmulas de conversión."

Memory stifles vital instinct, and the past imprisons the individual. Benet is clearly diverging from Proust and Machado on this point, for he asserts that the human psyche, by being entangled in the past, loses its creative, purposive faculty. His is a negative conception of life and time, as this deduction indicates: "Para quien no cree en una marcha del espíritu objetivo hacia su realización histórica [the Marxist creed, for example], sino que confía más bien en la reducción de los límites del espíritu subjetivo, tal como son vislumbrados en la pasión, a los datos de la memoria, no puede haber un ardid de la razón"; in this context, the word "razón" appears to mean 'validity to the subjective conscience or intellect'. The final section of this essay introduces the theme of death, a decisive factor in Benet's metaphysical discussion. Death is an issue which serves to heighten the divorce between an individual's faculties of passion and reason; it is a problem which shows man "cómo el continuo por donde en verdad fluye su vida carece de una estructura racional a la que se superpone una ordenación." The young author states that man is incapable of perceiving the true nature and structure of his life by intellect alone; he is "un islote de racionalidad en un medio absurdo". Benet's philosophy rests upon a recognition of the insoluble enigma of life and may be considered an approximation, in admittedly unsystematic and less detailed form, to the basic mood of Existentialism. "Un extempore" ends with a neutral indication of human insufficiency, expressed in the author's detailed awareness of: "como la memoria es el registro de una vida que no recuerda, como la experiencia es el rigor del inexperto, como la pasión se remite a un ayer no vivido y como la razón



es la mejor muestra de la sinrazón de este mundo... "71

Benet's ideology is fully consonant with the general Weltschauung of the century. It also indicates the persistence, in Spanish letters from the fin de siglo era to the present day, of an evaluation of the theme of time strictly subordinate to a broad cultural framework of metaphysical disorientation. His is a less emotionally anguished posture, but his work, like that of Unamuno, Baroja, Azorín and Antonio Machado, is essentially the expression of a sensibility founded on the collapse of faith in World Reason and on the premise of man's inability to discover the meaning of human existence.

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<sup>71</sup>Juan Benet, "Un extempore," in Puerta de tierra (Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1970), pp. 88-111.

Twentieth century literature is complementary to philosophy as a vehicle for expressing the widespread views on time, existence and reality which, as we have just seen, amount to a major ideological upheaval. Thomas Mann, in The Magic Mountain, H.G. Wells, James Joyce, Aldous Huxley, Virginia Woolf and William Faulkner, Robbe-Grillet and Michel Butor, Alejo Carpentier, J.L. Borges and G. García Márquez, all explore reality from one essential starting point: the critical consideration of time. Earlier, Marcel Proust's classic À la recherche du temps perdu (1913 and 1927) was singularly symptomatic of the trend of thought and sensibility in the new century's early years, and constituted a fitting prefiguration of what has continued to be an issue of cardinal importance throughout all that growing century's culture. The philosophical quest at the heart of this masterpiece springs from the existential problem of time: the source of the author's dilemma is a mood of insecurity, a metaphysical concern with the continuity of the past and for the safeguarding of a personal sense of identity with previous, transient experience. Proust perceived how time could be considered a nightmare and a hostile property of life, and was fortunate to discover a system ensuring solution to his dilemma. His was a rare success; time continued to affect philosophers and literateurs as a Problematik during and after the triumph embodied in "Le temps retrouvé". Proust also illustrated the extent to which time could affect the narrative structure of the novel. In this he was again representative of the epoch. Lukács, Mendilow, Castagnino, and Hutchens<sup>72</sup> are amongst those

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<sup>72</sup>See Lukács, La théorie du roman (Berlin - Spandau: Gouthier, 1963). Mendilow and Castagnino, op.cit. Eleanor Hutchens' "The Novel as Chronomorph," Novel, V, 3 (Spring 1972), 215 -24, is an enlightening and up-to-date study. It is from this study that we borrow the word "chronomorph" for subsequent use.



critics who regard the novel as a primarily temporal medium whose internal and external form may be viewed as abstract analogues of time, for "el Tiempo afecta esencia y estructura de lo literario."<sup>73</sup> The twentieth century "Novel as Chronomorph" has developed prodigiously into a highly sophisticated architectonic form. Time has become as constant and deliberate an element on the structural, as it has on the thematic, level of contemporary fiction.

The novel of the twentieth century is primarily concerned with experimentation, as, for example, Ramón Buckley has observed: "el problema formal se ha convertido en la razón de ser de gran parte de la novela de hoy."<sup>74</sup> Ortega y Gasset defined a general tendency illustrated by the practice of many writers contemporary with him in his assertion that "la obra de arte vive más de su forma que de su material."<sup>75</sup> The twentieth century novel's experimental character is exemplified above all in the conception and treatment of plot. Since conventional plot implies a terminus a quo and a terminus ad quem, that is, an element of movement and progression through action, it is also inseparable from the consideration of time and horizontal temporal progression. In a scholarly work, Frank Kermode refers to the literary plot as "an organization that humanizes time by giving it form"; the narrative paradigm is for him an "image of the grand temporal consonance".<sup>76</sup> The development of the concept of time is complemented by a revision of

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<sup>73</sup>Castagnino, Tiempo y expresión literaria, p. 15.

<sup>74</sup>Buckley, Problemas formales en la novela española contemporánea (Barcelona: Península, 1968), p. 16.

<sup>75</sup>Ortega y Gasset, Ideas sobre la novela, in Obras, II, 1023.

<sup>76</sup>Kermode, op. cit., pp. 45 and 17.

the notion of plot. Elizabeth Dipple concludes that "no single aspect of literature has become more subject to re-thinking, philosophical doubt, anthropological disproving and intellectual experimentation."<sup>77</sup> So, the literary treatment of time, plot and structure is at the core of the twentieth century mode of technical innovation which has been promoted by the need and desire to "conseguir formalmente una visión del hombre de nuestro tiempo".<sup>78</sup>

The traditional novel, from Cervantes to Dickens and Flaubert, was subject to a major formative influence, that of Aristotelian theory according to which plot was synonymous with order. In the course of the nineteenth century, at the height of its career, the novel's prescribed form showed a marked degree of authorial allegiance to the classical notion of plot. Its prime facet was ordered development according to the principle of causality and this was mirrored in an established paradigm of coherence. The nineteenth century novel was, however, the product of a specific socio-economic, philosophico-intellectual and religious environment which generated a theory of literary realism considered untenable by many writers of this century, but acceptable to and obediently put into practice by those of the early and mid-nineteenth. Inherent in that century's creed of realism was an orthodox view of structure as an orderly and dynamic architecture of character and action. Time was depicted as an external milieu and uniform backcloth against which the characters evolved in a linear,

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<sup>77</sup>E. Dipple, Plot, in The Critical Idiom collection (London: Methuen & Co., 1970), p. 43.

<sup>78</sup>Baquero Goyanes, Proceso de la novela actual (Madrid: Rialp, 1963), p. 203.



monodimensional and consistent process; the structural role of Flaubert, George Eliot or Galdós' protagonists was simply that of déroulement, development or desarrollo in a gradual adjustment to reality which formed the essence of the Bildungsroman. The characteristic nineteenth century hero underwent a progressive transformation of character and destiny effected by the objective passing of time; novelistic structure aimed at reflecting this in a paradigmatic linear narrative comprising a dynamic, yet balanced, series of events, neatly interlocking in a strictly causal and chronological order. Such a plot was a diagram or pattern of coherence and stability symbolic of that century's cultural macro-structure. Robbe-Grillet concludes that the schematic and orthodox structure of those novels was "lié à tout un système rationaliste et organisateur", a system which generated certain rules of literary practice: "Tous les éléments techniques du récit - emploi systématique du passé simple et de la troisième personne, adoption sans condition du déroulement chronologique, intrigues linéaires, courbe régulière des passions, tension de chaque episode vers une fin, etc - tout visait à imposer l'image d'un univers stable, cohérent, contenu, univoque, entièrement déchiffrable."<sup>79</sup> Sartre describes that culture as one "qui n'a pas encore conscience des dangers qui le menacent, qui dispose d'une morale, d'une échelle de valeurs."<sup>80</sup> In short, that atmosphere was inseparable from an ethic and a metaphysic of positive security.

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<sup>79</sup> Robbe-Grillet, Pour un nouveau roman, pp. 36-7.

<sup>80</sup> Sartre, Qu'est-ce que la littérature? (Paris: Gallimard, 1964), p. 178.

The society which accepted early and mid-nineteenth century realism was superseded by one which witnessed the undermining and incipient collapse of the preceding epoch's stability. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the crisis of contemporary European culture was a startlingly present reality. The traditional foundations of that culture, the absolute of World Reason, had been radically and irremediably undermined. The disappearance or rejection of traditional ideals and the consequent rise and adoption of new and radical ones occurred no less in literature than in any other aspect of culture. Since it is the novel which especially portrays the problem of man's situation in the world and his relation to destiny, this literary genre was particularly affected by the collapse of values. "As soon as the writer ceased to be a witness to the universal, to become the incarnation of a tragic awareness (around 1850), his first gesture was to choose the commitment of his form."<sup>81</sup> The inherited concept of plot immediately came under critical review in a comprehensive "modernist assault on forms" which made "new demands on every artistic medium. No category of space or time, order or chaos, dream or fact, action or reflection, causality or chance, syntax or metaphor ... remains after this upheaval of the imagination quite intact."<sup>82</sup> Twentieth century novelists from Azorín to Juan Benet, from Proust to Robbe-Grillet and from Faulkner to William Burroughs have challenged and rejected, in the interests of realism, the suitability of the neo-Aristotelian plot with

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<sup>81</sup> Roland Barthes, Writing Degree Zero (London: Cape Editions, 1970), p. 9.

<sup>82</sup> Ihab Hassan, The Dismemberment of Orpheus: toward a Post-Modern Literature (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 9.



its careful structuring of events according to an objective logic. That Weltanschauung constructed around the central concepts of Reason, order and progress seems obsolete now. The prevailing philosophical view of time as a subjective category relative to experience and the notion of history as an irrational, purposeless process have conditioned a new appraisal of temporal reality, and have consequently paved the way for the creation of a new set of regulations for the literary presentation of that reality. Virginia Woolf and André Gide, among others, made public, in 1919 and 1925 respectively, their opinion of the conventional realism, embodied in the nineteenth century novel. They made particular reference to plot and structure, the artefacts of temporal experience. "Life is not a series of gig-lamps symmetrically arranged," argued Mrs. Woolf,<sup>83</sup> reflecting the contrived arrangements of events in the conventionally constructed novel. Then Gide criticised the Naturalist school's attitude to plot: "The great defect of that school is that it always cuts its slice in the same direction; in time, lengthwise. Why not in breadth? Or in depth? As for me, I should like not to cut it at all."<sup>84</sup> These two writers were arguing, with sound critical awareness, for a revision of the conventional mode of literary plotting. The logic which lay behind that old style was now considered insufficient to account for a more complex reality which included in its plenitude an essential contingency requiring to be respected and fittingly portrayed: a mechanically consistent chronology, a schematic order and a falsely symmetrical, over-articulated distribution of events are no longer verisimilar as structural representations of human reality.

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<sup>83</sup>V. Woolf, "Modern Fiction," in The Common Reader (London: Hogarth, 1929), p. 189.

<sup>84</sup>A. Gide, Les Faux Monnayeurs (1925), part 11 chapter iii, quoted by Miriam Allott, Novelists on the Novel (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), p. 79.

The problem of form was an especially polemical issue in fin de siglo Spain. There, the members of the Generation of '98 were carrying out a revaluation of literary technique which preceded, by some fifteen years or more, that of the European figures heralded as the founders and first major exponents of the twentieth-century modern novel. Apart from expressing the epochal sensibility of crisis and illustrating the newly-born century's fascination with the subject of time, the '98 also revised the concepts of form and structure.

Unamuno's contribution to the renovation of novelistic form is a most important subject of critical study which, until recently, appears to have been considered secondary to the ideological value of his work. The approach adopted by Leon Livingstone, Geoffrey Ribbans and Ronald Batchelor marks an important departure from the prevalent norm.<sup>85</sup> Although Unamuno's concern is with the creation of form from the author's point of view, his theory, entertained in the early years of the century, of the "oviparous" and the "viviparous" novels implies a revaluation of novelistic structure in favour of organic fluidity. There is an emotionally-based rejection of rigorous, systematic formalism which prefigures the creative freedom advocated by the Surrealists. Breton, for example, "objected to the novelist's structuring of events according to an a priori logic, instead of allowing the event to reveal

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<sup>85</sup> Livingstone, "Unamuno and the Aesthetic of the Novel," Hispania, XXIV (1941), 442-450. Ribbans, "La evolución de la novelística Unamuniana," in Niebla y Soledad. Aspectos de Unamuno y Machado (Madrid: Gredos, 1971), pp. 83-107. Batchelor, Unamuno Novelist. A European Perspective (Oxford: Dolphin, 1972).



its own logic."<sup>86</sup> Unamuno's attitude had a resounding impact on the temporal architecture of his novels. Though painstaking and scrupulous in his attention to their construction, he aimed at the creation of a plot, or fictional duration, in which the protagonist's development and the rhythm of that process would appear quite unrestricted.

A similar view of form was expressed also by Baroja. Adopting the premise that the novel is a microstructural analogue of history, i.e., a chronomorph, Baroja defended an approach of compositional and structural freedom: "una novela es posible sin argumento, sin arquitectura y sin composicion," he argued. "La novela, en general, es como la corriente de la Historia: no tiene ni principio ni fin, empieza y acaba donde se quiera."<sup>87</sup> Sceptic though he was, Baroja did not challenge the principle of consistent plot-chronology, but he nevertheless rejected the restrictive framework of the well-planned and deliberately executed novel.

Azorín's theory of literary plotting is more explicit and exact in detail. In chapter XIV of part I of La voluntad, Yuste "el maestro" discusses novelistic technique with the young Azorín in a conversation which indicates a highly critical attitude to form in the author. Yuste reflects on the problem of representing reality in fiction and contends that "Ante todo, no debe haber fábula ...; la vida no tiene fábula; es diversa, multiforme, ondulante, contradictoria...;

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<sup>86</sup> Anna Balakian, "Dada-Surrealism: Fundamental Differences" in Proceedings of the Comparative Literature Symposium, ed. W. Zyla (Texas: Lubbock, 1970), III, 25.

<sup>87</sup> Baroja, La nave de los locos, in Obras, IV, 326.

todo menos simétrica, rígida como aparece en las novelas."<sup>88</sup> His argument implies a revaluation of the temporal nature of structure in favour of contingency and fluid process. It will be referred to in greater detail in due course.

Unamuno, Baroja and Azorín were thus all highly aware of the dissonance between the novel's paradigmatic, stereotyped form and the changed sense of temporal reality prevalent at the turn of the century. In an appendix to this study, an attempt is made to assess the importance of Gabriel Miró's structural technique in an early work, La novela de mi amigo (1907). It is suggested that Miró was keenly aware of the relation between time and novelistic structure. The reader is referred to that section for further comment.

The serious critical spirit of these turn-of-the-century novelists re-appeared in the creative work of Ramón Pérez de Ayala and Ramón Gómez de la Serna, two prominent members of the following generation of Spanish intellectuals and writers. In two novels in particular, Pérez de Ayala renewed the mechanics of structure with brilliant originality. In Belarmino y Apolonio (1921), the author rejected the notions of an unambivalent reality, an absolute chronology and a single perspective and replaced them with the principle of the relativistic multiplicity of dimensions. In this novel, Don Amaranto urges the narrator to adopt a painter's vision and technique of depicting reality: "la visión propia del hombre, que es la visión diafenomenal, como quiera que, por enfocar el objeto con cada ojo desde un lado, lo penetra en ángulo y

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<sup>88</sup> Azorín, La voluntad, Obras completas (Madrid: Aguilar, 1959), 1, 864.



recibe dos imágenes laterales que se confunden en una imagen central, es una visión en profundidad. El novelista, en cuanto hombre, ve las cosas estereoscópicamente, en profundidad, pero en cuanto artista, está desprovisto de medios con que reproducir su visión. No puede pintar; únicamente puede describir, enumerar." Don Amaranto explains that "describir es como ver con un ojo, paseándolo por la superficie de un plano, porque las imágenes son sucesivas en el tiempo, y no se funden, ni superponen, ni, por lo tanto, adquieren profundidad." The novelist-cum-narrator is consequently advised: "Busca la visión diafenomenal. Inhíbete en tu persona de novelista. Haz que otras dos personas la vean (la Rúa Ruera) al propio tiempo, desde ángulos laterales, contrapuestos. Recuerda ... como ese mismo objeto, la Rúa Ruera, suscita duplicidad de imágenes e impresiones en dos observadores de genio contradictorio..."<sup>89</sup> In this theory of relativity, spatial criteria are accounted for more than temporal factors; on the practical level, however, Pérez de Ayala translated the hypothesis into temporal terms. He devised a three-dimensional structure of counterpoint for Belarmino y Apolonio, the action of which refers to two historically separate temporal spheres which the author eventually fuses in a final vision sub specie aeternitatis. The formal depiction of time's multidimensional nature was still Pérez de Ayala's preoccupation in El curandero de su honra (1926), a novel which represents an adventurous solution to the problem of the presentation of simultaneity. Confronted with the need to depict the separate yet concurrent experience of two characters,

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<sup>89</sup>Pérez de Ayala, Belarmino y Apolonio, in Obras Completas (Madrid: Aguilar, 1969), IV, 33-5.

Tigre Juan and Herminia, the author resorted to a shrewd manipulation of the novel's physical medium. He divided the pages of his text into two vertical columns, the one on the left referring to "La Vida de Tigre Juan", the one on the right to the developments in "La Vida de Herminia".<sup>90</sup> What appears to be a simple manoeuvre in form may be considered conscious endeavour in the cause of realism and the development of structural technique. Perez de Ayala came to terms with the problem of novelistic structure as temporal analogue with appreciable creative responsibility.

Gómez de la Serna, a sensationally innovatory figure, reiterated Azorín's repudiation of consequential linearity in the structure of the novel, basing his objection on similar philosophical premises. His humorous recognition of the metaphysical void and the absurd led him to assert that a true representation of life would be incomplete without an acknowledgement of those forces of chaos, incongruence and mystery which, in his defiant opinion, were the predominant components of reality. The disruption embodied in human experience would acquire expression through a disjointed structure of fiction exemplified in his novel, or anti-novel, El incongruente. The narrator says of Gustavo, the protagonist: "Ni de la novela de esta misma época ni de la de después se pueden seguir con cierta cronología las peripecias. Tiene que ser una incongruencia la misma historia de su vida y la de la elección de capítulos."<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup>Pérez de Ayala, El curandero de su honra, *op.cit.*, pp. 709-740 and p. 749.

<sup>91</sup>Gómez de la Serna, El incongruente (Madrid: Calpe, 1922), p. 11.



Ramón María del Valle-Inclán also incorporated certain elements in the structure of his novels which correspond to temporal concerns. In Tirano Banderas (1926), he adopted the technique of successive alternation to solve the problem of how to depict two concurrent processes of reality. Jean Franco has interpreted the structure of the two novels in El ruedo ibérico (1926-8) as concentric form, a practical correspondance with Valle-Inclán's mystical phylosophy of time as expressed in La lámpara maravillosa (1916).<sup>92</sup>

So, in the first three decades of the twentieth century, these leading Spanish novelists made a significant contribution to the innovation of structural technique. A large number of positive creative moves were made towards the development and sophistication of the novel as chronomorph. Furthermore, the fact that Azorín and Pérez de Ayala, for example, carried out their experiments with time and structure before Proust, Joyce and Aldous Huxley is a point of historical importance which must not be overlooked in the critical estimation of modern Spanish letters. The Generation of '98 and its successors occupy an advanced position in the vanguard of twentieth century European literature.

The issue of the continuity between pre- and post-Civil War novels of Spain is a complex and problematical one which involves various

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<sup>92</sup>Jean Franco, "The Concept of Time in the Ruedo ibérico," Bulletin of Hispanic Studies, XXXIX (1962), 177-87. See also, Harold L. Boudreau, "The Circular Structure of Valle-Inclán's Ruedo ibérico," Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, LXXXII, 1 (1967), 128-35, and Verity Smith's analysis of Tirano Banderas (London: Grant and Cutler Ltd., 1971), pp. 12-19.

extra-literary factors and which must, to a large extent, be considered independent of the argument offered in this thesis. A deliberate selection of works may, however, serve to illustrate the existence of certain coherent and consistent trends throughout the course of the twentieth-century Spanish novel. R. Bosch has commented on the matter in general terms. "The spiritual coincidence between the Spanish novel of the thirties and the present day novelists," he argues, "would authorize the use of the concept of 'continuity', although there was an abrupt, violent break between the two groups, caused by the Civil War and its outcome, which forced the writers of the thirties to go into exile. The present renaissance of the novel has taken place, therefore, without the influence of the novelists of the thirties, but in complete harmony with their spirit and work."<sup>93</sup> Post-War writers continue to show great interest, in the theme of time and in the problem of finding an appropriate fictional form. They have, naturally, had more philosophical theory and literary precedents at their disposal than did the great innovators of the first three decades. If this view is accepted, it would follow that their technical achievement is that of emphasising, by a process of consolidation and refinement, the principles introduced by their predecessors. The formal experimentation promoted by Pérez de Ayala and Joaquín Arderius, for example, has continued to be realised, with increasing confidence and success by those writers who first published in or soon after 1942-3 and by subsequent generations of novelists in Spain.

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<sup>93</sup>Books Abroad (Winter 1965), p. 14, footnote 1.



Sanz Villanueva devotes a section of his work to the techniques adopted by various authors in relation to time and structural expression. He mentions temporal compression, disruption of chronology and stream of consciousness.<sup>94</sup> Torrente Ballester, however, finds a critical shortcoming in the general attitude to formal experimentation held by post-War Spanish authors. Arguing that they have no coherent and common source of novelistic tradition on which to draw, he refers to the dangers inherent in imitating European and American practice: "el novelista de la postguerra se encuentra, sin embargo, con que la novela europea y la americana han hallado nuevos modos de narrar y describir y que esos modos nuevos aparecen, las más de las veces, expresados por medio de técnicas muy visibles cuya sustancia es, generalmente, la ruptura del orden cronológico de los hechos y de su encadenamiento causal." He concludes that "el fenómeno consiste, sencillamente, en que se ha dado a la técnica un valor sustantivo y de que se la considera como instrumento transportable, olvida la elemental verdad estética de que el tema determina la técnica; de que la técnica no se justifica por sí misma, sino por las posibilidades expresivas que libera. Los resultados son, no formas que traducen estructuras, sino estructuras al descubierto; no organismos, sino mecanismos."<sup>95</sup> Torrente Ballester's comments are perceptive and valuable, and may be applied to a large number of Spanish

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<sup>94</sup>Santos Sanz Villanueva, Tendencias de la novela española actual (Madrid: Edicusa 1972), pp. 225-35.

<sup>95</sup>G. Torrente Ballester, Panorama de la literatura española contemporánea (Madrid: Guadarrama, 1965), p. 488.

novels of the post-War period. Yet there are exceptions to his dogmatic system of negation. Camilo José Cela's La colmena, for example, is an organic, if not technically original, work: the fragmentation, one of whose purposes is to present the simultaneity of multiple personalities in a social collectivity, is a fitting formal counterpart to the book's social theme. Ana María Matute's structures of symphonic mood and Juan Goytisolo's streams of consciousness are forms wholly suited to expressing the powers of association inherent in a temporally elastic or fluid psyche. Hector Vázquez Azpiri's reinstatement of the Ayala parallel texts in Fauna is an act of imitation, but this is nevertheless a fitting form for the reality he wishes to depict. Ramón Buckley defends Miguel Delibes' La hoja roja, Martín Santos' Tiempo de silencio and Sánchez-Ferlosio's El Jarama as formal exercises of positive literary value.<sup>96</sup> To this in no way exhaustive list may be added the name of Juan Benet, whose recent novel Un viaje de invierno justifiably incorporates a meandering Faulknerian structure of labyrinthine time wholly in keeping with the enigmatic minds and the contingent reality it portrays.

The authors and works included in this list reflect a general tendency amongst the Spanish writers of fiction in the post-war era to create novels whose structure is essentially chronomorphous. The contemporary Spanish novel has few internationally recognized obras maestras, but there are a definite number of works whose positive artistic value derives from the successful choice of a form organically concordant with that novel's content. Cela's Pabellón de reposo,

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<sup>96</sup>Buckley, Problemas formales en la novela española contemporánea.



Luis Martín Santos' Tiempo de Silencio and Aldecoa's Parte de una historia may be included in this group. By concentrating our attention on these three novels we do not mean to overlook the general importance of such works as La colmena, El Jarama, Los bravos, and Tormenta de verano, which have gained both peninsular and international recognition. We have chosen these post-Civil War novels in particular because they may be regarded as continuing on a more sophisticated level a thematico-structural tendency established by earlier twentieth-century Spanish writers, the most prominent being Unamuno, Azorín, Pérez de Ayala and Valle-Inclán.

The purpose of this thesis is to relate the constant trend in structural, or "architectonic", innovation<sup>97</sup> and the replacement of the inherited paradigm in the twentieth-century Spanish novel to that era's new, contemporary philosophical notions of time. These notions are considered inseparable from their broader cultural context. The collapse of faith in World Reason has engendered various profoundly pessimistic conceptions of time, both in relation to collective-historical and individual experience. These may be incorporated into a particular novelistic form with a view to creating a structural vehicle for expressing that general pessimism. Paz en la guerra, La voluntad, La novela de mi amigo, Pabellón de reposo, Tiempo de silencio and Parte de una historia will subsequently be analysed as organic forms, and have been selected on two accounts. First, they are examples of the consistently

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<sup>97</sup>Sharon Spencer's Space, Time and Structure in the Modern Novel (New York: University Press, 1971) refers to, "the architectonic novel".

developing chronomorph in Spanish prose fiction: their structural complexity merits closer attention than has been afforded by existing criticism. They have been selected on a second and complementary account because the fundamentally temporal nature of their structures is related to a general thematic interest in the problematic role of time in human existence. No conclusions are drawn about the purely aesthetic effects which may be achieved by this manipulation of the medium of narrative. Attention is focussed primarily on structure as the embodiment of problematical idea.

Our insistence on the temporal nature of novelistic structure does not imply a denial of the relation of structural functions to other factors. La colmena, for example, whilst illustrating temporal concurrence, also depicts spatial multiplicity. Joseph Frank does in fact argue for a spatial evaluation of form in literature;<sup>98</sup> it is an argument which few critics, however, have cared to support. Structure's primary function is to depict categories of time, as Lukács suggests in his assertion that "c'est seulement dans le roman, dont tout le contenu consiste en une quête nécessaire de l'essence et dans une impuissance à la trouver, que le temps se trouve lié à la forme."<sup>99</sup>

A number of critics have already suggested the temporal function of the structures of some twentieth century Spanish novels. José Ortega and Jiménez Martos have discussed El Jarama from this viewpoint, whilst María Lozano Alonso, Albert Barrera Vidal and Eduardo Godoy

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<sup>98</sup> Joseph Frank, "Spatial Form in Modern Literature", Sewanee Review, LIII (1945), 221-40, 433-56 & 643-53.

<sup>99</sup> Lukács, La théorie du roman, p. 121.



Gallardo have made interesting contributions to the debate in their respective studies of Pérez de Ayala's Belarmino y Apolonio, Cela's Pascual Duarte and Sender's Requiem por un campesino español.<sup>100</sup> Fewer have related the said structural patterns to those metaphysical issues which form the idealogical core of this study. Leon Livingstone's thorough analysis of Azorín's novels takes into account the awareness of crisis which is illustrated in that writer's works, but subordinates metaphysical considerations to the problem of aesthetic form.<sup>101</sup> Jean Franco's interpretation of El ruedo ibérico's concentric structure as a counterpart of Valle-Inclán's mystical leaning in philosophy is a valuable account of the correspondence between "novelistic structure and a certain metaphysical conception of time".<sup>102</sup> Paul Ilie has made some equally illuminating remarks about certain novels by Cela, and Gómez de la Serna's El incongruente.<sup>103</sup>

It is hoped in this thesis to amplify this small body of criticism. The structural forms analysed in subsequent chapters are interpreted as the concordant expression of certain notions of time which are symptomatic of the crisis of values in contemporary culture.

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<sup>100</sup>J. Ortega, "Tiempo y estructura en El Jarama," Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos, 201 (set, 1966), pp. 801-88. Jiménez Martos, "El tiempo y El Jarama," Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos, XXVII (1956), 82. María B. Lozano Alonso, "El tiempo en Belarmino y Apolonio," Boletín de la Real Academia Española, LI (1971), 413-58. Barrera Vidal, "La perspective temporelle dans L'Etranger de Camus et La familia de Pascual Duarte de Camilo José Cela," Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie, 84 (1968), pp. 309-22. Godoy Gallardo, "Problemática y sentido de Requiem por un campesino español de Ramón Sender," Letras de Deusto, I, I (1971).

<sup>101</sup>Livingstone, Tema y forma en las novelas de Azorín (Madrid: Gredos, 1970).

<sup>102</sup>J. Franco, op. cit. (note 92).

<sup>103</sup>P. Ilie, La novelística de Camilo José Cela (Madrid: Gredos, 1963). The Surrealist Mode in Spanish Literature (University of Michigan Press, 1968), pp. 152-6.

## PART I

## The Novel of the Early 1900's in Spain

The very first instances of deliberate chromomorphic technique in the twentieth-century Spanish novel are to be found in the work of Unamuno and Azorín. In this respect the two authors occupy a precise position of historical importance, for their innovatory use of tense and structural paradigm established a pattern on which subsequent writers could base their practice and experiments.





## CHAPTER I

## Time, Tense and Theme in Unamuno's

Paz en la guerra

Miguel de Unamuno's first major novel Paz en la guerra,<sup>1</sup> published in 1897 after eight years' preparation, has been justly set in critical perspective by Carlos Blanco Aguinaga's intuitive and incisive El Unamuno contemplativo.<sup>2</sup> Blanco Aguinaga's thesis amends the widely held but incomplete view of Paz en la guerra as simply a historical novel written in the mould of the nineteenth-century realistic chronicle. Justifiable as Eurgenio de Nora's comments on the author's occasional artistic clumsiness may be, his virtual dismissal of Paz en la guerra as a "crónica novelesca realista, concebida según los procedimientos de un arte narrativo ya entonces declinante"<sup>3</sup> must be considered a superficial generalization which overlooks some important aspects of both the work's form and its content. Three points of critical interest emerge from Nora's appraisal, two of which are central to this study. These are: first, the presentation of reality and the problems connected with it, and second, the element of plot or structure in the novel. We shall not be focussing our attention especially on the third point: the question of the narrator or author's point of view.

We consider that this novel, seen in its context within the history of fictional technique, contains much that merits it the

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<sup>1</sup>Reference will be made throughout to the Afrodisio Aguado edition of Unamuno's Obras completas, volume II, published in Madrid in 1958.

<sup>2</sup>Blanco Aguinaga, El Unamuno contemplativo (Mexico: NRFH. Publications, 1959).

<sup>3</sup>Eugenio de Nora, La novela española contemporánea, vol. I (Madrid: Gredos, 1958), p. 17.

description of 'experimental' in view of the unique correspondence between its thematic and narrative structures. The work is difficult to classify, and might be considered as complying with the Barojan definition "un saco en que cabe todo". At times it is formally untidy, the expression occasionally being repetitious and undisciplined; its content is varied and sometimes diffuse. On one level, Paz en la guerra constitutes a historical document in social and political terms - (here it must be admitted that Blanco Aguinaga is a trifle dogmatic in his exclusive refutation of its chronicle quality). Its outstanding themes are, in this respect, the opposition between city and country life, in conjunction with the sub-theme of the pastoral myth; the conflict between Liberalism and Carlism; and the socio-political solution to these conflicting values. On a more abstract level, the novel may be considered as an ideological tract presented through a selection of characters of varying mental, emotional and intellectual dispositions. Subordinate but complementary to the overriding concept of the dichotomy between historia and intrahistoria are the themes of childhood, time, death and finality, faith, anguish and contemplation, vitalism and ataraxia. These ideas are expressed in accordance with Unamuno's vision of life in terms of sueño, agonía and the antitheses of acción-idea, lucha-reposo, myth/legend-reality and razón-verdad.

Characterisation is thematically motivated in Paz en la guerra. Just as a variety of themes makes the novel extremely rich in ideas recognisable as topoi of fin de siglo and twentieth-century thought, so many of the characters are stock contemporary fictional figures. A simple approach would separate those who are emotionally and those who are intellectually orientated. The former group would include Ignacio



Iturriondo and his father Pedro Antonio; a second group might include don Joaquín, Ignacio's Tío Pascual and don Miguel Arana, with Pachico Zabalbide as its prime representative. Ignacio is basically a historically orientated activist, but with leanings towards a heroico-mythical experience of intrahistoria. His father also shares the dual historical and intrahistorical inclination, but in inverted proportions:

Pedro Antonio is predominantly a quietist, living, at the beginning of the novel, in a peaceful community, contentedly married. But he enthusiastically recalls the activity of his youth and is consequently anxious for his son to emulate his former dynamic vitalism. Yet it is Pachico Zabalbide whom we choose to consider as the character of greatest significance, in agreement with Blanco Aguinaga who stresses his central function in the novel's ideological dimension: Pachico he describes as "el peculiar personaje que sin estar en el centro de la novela presenta su tesis de manera discursiva...."<sup>4</sup>

Pachico may be most plausibly seen as the forerunner of Augusto Pérez in Unamuno's own Niebla, if not as a prototype for the twentieth century anguished fictional 'hero' in general. In this respect he is a fitting companion, though on a smaller scale, to Ganivet's Pío Cid, probably the first fully-fledged Spanish fictional hero in the novel of the '98. Yet Pachico offers another facet of personality in addition to his vital experience of angst: he exemplifies a possible solution to the existential dilemma, a solution he attains through the contemplative faculties which allow him to penetrate the essential, mystical dimension of life, defined by Unamuno as intrahistoria.

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<sup>4</sup>Blanco Aguinaga, El Unamuno contemplativo, p. 67.

It is with this dual nature of human personality in mind that we intend to approach the thematic and narrative structures of Pax en la guerra. The fundamental basis of the work's content is Unamuno's concern with the metaphysical dilemma. He exemplifies the twentieth-century search for the absolute, symptomatic of the collapse of confidence in science and World Reason. The novel's form incarnates the possibility of human attainment of transcendence, as illustrated in Pachico's personal development.

Unamuno defined his own dual nature as early as 1897: "es de saber que hay en nosotros dos hombres,"<sup>5</sup> an opinion he restated in "Nicodemo el fariseo", which he published in 1899: "Hay, Nicodemo, en nosotros todos dos hombres, el temporal y el eterno, el que adelanta o atrasa en las cambiantes apariencias y el que crece o mengua en las inmutables realidades."<sup>6</sup> These two passages express three antitheses from which three important critical concepts may be deduced: (i) that the "agonic" aspect of Unamuno's personality and ideology is opposed and yet complementary to the "contemplative", (ii) that these two character-functions correspond to respective frameworks of historia and intrahistoria and (iii) that agonía and historia are related to "lo temporal", whilst contemplación and its perceived reality, intra-historia, have as their object and context of temporal experience "lo eterno".

Life, death, finality, time and anguish are, for Unamuno, inseparable aspects of one synthetic problem: human existence. "La

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<sup>5</sup>Quoted by Aguinaga, El Unamuno contemplativo, p. 33.

<sup>6</sup>"Nicodemo el fariseo", Obras completas, III, 133.



idea del transcurrir vital, en el común de los mortales, se asocia con la angustia frente al tiempo biológico, con la meditación acerca de las fronteras de la temporalidad o con el enigma del Tiempo," states Raúl Castagnino;<sup>7</sup> Unamuno is no exception to the Argentinian critic's rule. At the core of the Spaniard's agonía - his postura vital which is a temperamental and ideological reaction to the metaphysic of discontent and vulnerability - is an awareness of time, and especially of the temporality of human existence. Some substantial allusion to "Nicodemo el fariseo" will illustrate this radical, sine qua non aspect of Unamuno's thought. In the prologue to this work, which constitutes a fictitious dialogue between Christ and Nicodemus, Unamuno states laconically that "No hay en realidad más que un gran problema, y es éste: ¿cuál es el fin del universo entero?" (p. 124).<sup>8</sup> As Frank Kermode has declared, the metaphysical problem, in Western philosophy in general, is inseparable from a criterion of purpose and that central to any existential attitude must be a "sense of an ending".<sup>9</sup> The problem is to find finality within the ephemeral, irreversible linearity of time: "En el tiempo, la línea que va siempre en la misma dirección, del pasado al porvenir, ¿dónde está el cero que marca el límite entre lo positivo y lo negativo?"<sup>10</sup> In the dialogue proper, Jesus poses Nicodemus the awkward questions: "¿Has meditado alguna vez, Nicodemo,

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<sup>7</sup>R. Castagnino, Tiempo y expresión literaria, p. 9.

<sup>8</sup>Cf. Francois Meyer, La ontología de Miguel de Unamuno (Madrid: Gredos, 1962), pp. 46-59.

<sup>9</sup>Kermode, The Sense of an Ending (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970).

<sup>10</sup>Unamuno, Del sentimiento trágico de la vida, Obras, XVI, 430.

con el corazón, en el tremendo misterio del tiempo irrevertible? ¿Has sentido penetrar hasta el tuétano de tu alma esta verdad de que el pasado no vuelve ya jamás, jamás, jamás? ¿Has considerado esta solemne y única realidad del presente entre el infinito del pasado y el infinito del porvenir, esta solemne realidad del presente eterno, siempre presente y fugitivo siempre?" (p.130). If life is ephemeral and a process of continual loss and deprivation, human action becomes stripped of meaning: "así que te produces en el tiempo, a lo irrevertible e irreparable del tiempo se somete tu acción" (p.135).

Only through Christian faith in God and Eternity can the dilemma of the irreversible flux and the eternal void be solved: "Cuando la razón me dice que no hay finalidad trascendente, la fe me contesta que debe haberla, y como debe haberla, la habrá" (p.124). Only through active faith can experience of, and fusion with, eternal Truth and Good be secured, and this within life itself. "¿Te has parado a mirar la eternidad en el seno del siempre fugitivo ahora y no abarcando pasado y futuro?" Jesus inquires of Nicodemus. "Porque esa eternidad que te imaginas se extiende desde lo insondable del último inasequible ayer a lo insondable del último inasequible mañana, es una eternidad muerta en su quietud, y has de buscar la eternidad viva sustentando el movimiento actual, en las entrañas mismas del presente, cual sustancia de éste, como raíz de la permanencia de lo fugitivo, en Dios para quien ayer y mañana son siempre hoy" (pp.130-1). Fusion with God implies fusion with permanence and eternity, so he who believes in Him will be released from the torments of time.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>See Borges' "Historia de la eternidad", Obras completas (Buenos Aires: Emecé, 1954), vol. II for a comparative study of theories of eternity.



This is a christianised, or "a lo divino" version of the theory of intrehistoria promulgated in "La tradición eterna", the first essay in the collection entitled En torno al casticismo, which Unamuno had published in 1895. Here, Unamuno stated in secular fashion that "lo que pasa queda, porque hay algo que sirve de sustento al perpetuo flujo de las cosas" (p.184). "Las olas de la historia ... ruedan sobre un mar continuo, hondo ..." (p.185); "en este fondo del mar, debajo de la historia, es donde vive la verdadera tradición, la eterna, en el presente, no en el pasado, muerto para siempre y enterrado en cosas muertas. En el fondo del presente hay que buscar la tradición eterna, en las entrañas del mar, no en los témpanos del pasado ..." (p.186). This doctrine of "la armonía siempre in fieri" (p.191) of universal substance is reminiscent of the philosophy of history as infinite organism propounded by Spinoza and Hegel; Francisco Fernández Turienzo indicates Unamuno's indebtedness also to the krausista conception of external and internal levels of historical reality.<sup>12</sup> In terms of an individual's personal experience, Unamuno asserts that "la tradición eterna es el fondo del ser del hombre mismo. El hombre, esto es, lo que hemos de buscar en nuestra alma" (p.187). He argues that man needs to perceive eternity within present time by communicating with the universal substance of humanity in the "intra-conscious" depths of his soul.

How is he to do this? Unamuno proposes two methods, in keeping with his dual agonistic-contemplative nature. In "Nicodemo el fariseo"

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<sup>12</sup> En torno al casticismo, estudio y edición de F. Fernández Turienzo (Madrid: Alcala, 1971), pp. 26-8.

Jesus states the taxing condition that "sentir y ver el mundo eterno, llegar a la verdad de todo, no ya solo a su razón, no es dado más que a la fe" (p.141). Through faith, "comunicanse las eternas honduras de nuestra alma, con la hondura eterna de la creación que nos rodea, con Dios que habita en todo y todo lo vivifica, con Dios, en quien como en mar común, somos, nos movemos y vivimos. Cuando Dios ... se te muestra en tu conciencia ... te ves perdido en el mar inmenso, sin propia conciencia temporal, en esplendente conciencia eterna ..." (p.134). Yet without faith, the only conscious certainty is the anguish of doubt and the only reality that struggle of conscience that Unamuno knows as agonía; "Es, en efecto, una cosa terrible ... cuando se llega a la dolorosa obsesión del desierto, que nos hace matar las horas, y que nos sume en la tristeza de la inutilidad de todo esfuerzo; cuando, extinguido el apetito de vida, se vive como por necesidad, por rutina, por cobardía o por terror a la muerte" (p.139).

What the Unamuno agónico fails to achieve through a lack of faith, the Unamuno contemplativo may succeed in attaining at this early stage of his spiritual career through mystical transcendental perception or intuition. In this respect, contemplation may be regarded as an analogue, and more critically as a substitute, for faith. Yet, the contemplative inclination is constant throughout his work and is as plausible an ideological-cum-spiritual attitude as agonía. Although the pangs of agony are to recur with tremendous compulsion after Unamuno's crisis of 1897 and thenceforth up to the end of his life - San Manuel, the last fictional protagonist, is a mortally perturbed individual for whom the technique of contemplation provides no consolation whatsoever for a corrosive malaise -, Pachico is fortunate to



find an authentic antidote for his anguish in the perception of intra-historic reality. This poetic insight affords a solution to the problem of time as temporality, probably its greatest service and value to Unamuno.

Paz en la guerra is a fictional presentation of the three dual ideas central to Unamuno's Weltanschauung. Far from being merely a historico-realistic novel, it deals progressively with the author and main character's basic Problematik, treating the dichotomies of history and intrahistoria, agonía and contemplation, and temporality and eternity. In addition to the literal value of the plot which relates the conflict between bureaucratic Liberalism and collective Carlism and its effect on the lives of individuals, the structure has a symbolic dimension dependent on the representative value and function of the three characters to whom a measure of prominence is given: Pedro Antonio, Ignacio - who dies over half-way through the novel's linear development - and Pachico. The three are linked thematically, each representing a different facet or degree of emphasis of the main themes: historia-intrahistoria, agonía-contemplación, and temporality-eternity. Their relation to the vital problems of death and time is their common link. The novel's title-words "paz" and "guerra" thereby come to acquire symbolic significance, paz being analogous to emotional or spiritual calm and guerra to its opposite: dissatisfaction in Ignacio, emotional turbulence in Pedro Antonio and metaphysical despair and agonía in Pachico. Guerra is related to history, paz to intrahistoria; similarly, eternity's principle attribute is peacefulness, whilst commotion and disruption are temporality's prime characteristics. Throughout the development

of Paz en la guerra the three characters' emotional or spiritual evolution runs complementary to the historical progress of the realistic chronicle. The novel's four levels can thus be schematically represented by the following formula:



PAZ → GUERRA + PAZ → PAZ

PACHICO	Childhood.	Ideo-spiritual crisis ----- + undercurrent of intra-historic habit.	Intrahistoric sublime vision leading to humanitarian idealism.
PEDRO ANTONIO	Social and family-based life of routine.	Personal history, commercial and political concern ----- + quietist contemplation of Nature.	Ultimate immersion in <u>intrahistoria</u> , and old age.
IGNACIO	Childhood immersion in <u>intrahistoria</u> .	a. Mind-body conflict b. Vitalistic heroism ----- + a. Resort to nature b. Death = Paz, and Ultimate Dream	
SPAIN	The pre-guerra stage of historical 19 <sup>th</sup> century Spain.	General historical disruption leading up to the Liberal-v-Carlist War ----- + Pueblo's intrahistoric continuity.	An implied, theoretical politico-social solution: Utopian egalitarianism.

A detailed study of Pachico's spiritual evolution reveals how exclusively it is conditioned by metaphysical factors. When he portrays Pachico as one who experiences time and life as one synthetic function, Unamuno anticipates Heidegger by affirming that time is the sine qua non of human existence. Fundamental, too, is the notion of Hegelian process, on which Unamuno commented in his article "Paz en la guerra" (Obras, X, 981), emphasising the "línea dialéctica" of time and life. On this dual structure he then superimposes a religious problematic which aligns him with Kierkegaard and Spinoza, among others.

For Pachico, whose existential motivation is ideo-spiritual, emergence from an intrahistoric state of peacefulness\* embodied in childhood is at one with his falling prey to intellectual dilemmas. By his initiation into metaphysical discontent, Pachico becomes aware of the temporal aspect of his existence - the acquisition of awe-inspiring knowledge to which his only possible reaction is the agony of doubt. He is supported in this respect by the secondary figure of don Miguel Arana who also conceives of life, time and death in "agonic" terms of transience, finality and doubt (p.310). Of the non-ideologically motivated characters, Rafaela is a thematic counterpart for Pachico, since she feels the tragedy of human transience, but without an awareness of the metaphysical, problematic issues at stake (p.283).

After a physically and emotionally delicate childhood, during which his devout uncle Joaquín imposed a rigid Catholic dogma on him, Pachico underwent a complex character development: "entró en la

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\*We choose to translate paz by the word "peacefulness" since we consider that Unamuno is referring to a quality.



virilidad pasando por un período de misticismo infantil y de voracidad intelectual" (p.129). At the age of eighteen, having spent the early years of puberty under the guidance of Jesuits, he went to Madrid to continue his studies; "era la época en que con el krausismo soplaban vientos de racionalismo" (p.131). As a consequence of his acquaintance with contemporary ideas, Pachico came to reappraise the value of his religious faith: "Seguía a la vez trabajando en su fe, preocupándole más que otra cosa el dogma del infierno, el que seres finitos sufrieran penas infinitas. La labor de racionalizar la fe íbala carcomiendo, despojándola de sus formas y reduciéndola a sustancia y jugo informe." The most definitive philosophical influence was to originate from Pachico's coming into contact with "la brusca invasión ... de mil ideas vagas y resonantes, de retazos de Hegel y de positivismo, recién llevado a Madrid, y que era lo que más le penetraba" (p.131). These theories undermined the ideological basis of Pachico's existential outlook and eventually caused him to suffer a series of spiritual crises. He could find no theory or system of ideas to form a sound foundation for his Weltanschauung, for, as he explained to Juanita and Ignacio, "los dogmas habían sido verdaderos en un tiempo, verdaderos puesto que se produjeron, pero que hoy no son y ni verdaderos ni falsos, por haber perdido toda sustancia y todo sentido" (p.137). Pachico was especially susceptible to the philosophical preoccupation with time: "atormentábale el terrible misterio del tiempo. Aprendida o hecha una cosa, ¿qué le dejaba? ¿Qué era él más que el día anterior? ¡Tener que pasar del ayer al mañana sin poder vivir a la vez en toda la serie del tiempo!" These considerations eventually led his thoughts on to the delicate subject of death and human finality, the "agonic" Unamuno's Achilles' heel: "Tales

reflexiones le llevaban en la oscuridad solitaria de la noche a la emoción de la muerte, emoción viva que le hacía temblar a la idea del momento, en que le cojera el sueño, aplanado ante el pensamiento de que un día habría de dormirse para no despertar. Era un terror loco a la nada, a hallarse solo en el tiempo vacío, terror loco que ... le hacía soñar que ... caía continuamente y sin descanso en el vacío eterno, con terrible caída" (pp. 133-4). In few, if any, other contexts have the Unamuno agónico's concerns been expressed so succinctly and so graphically.

Such is the condition from which Pachico begins his spiritual evolution, as it is depicted in Paz en la guerra. In this first stage he is anguished - or "agonic" to comply with Unamuno's personal vocabulary - and in the throes of a personal "guerra" of ideas and sentiments. This may be regarded as an initial 'thesis', to adopt Hegelian terminology.

An analysis of the next stage in Pachico's spiritual development shows a less troubled youth who has acquired the habit of communing with nature instead of laying his vulnerable soul open to the attacks of destructive reason. Whereas at the beginning of the novel Pachico had been physically incapable of strenuous activity - when Ignacio and Juanito went mountain-climbing, "Pachico se fatigaba en trepar la falda, haciendo que se detuvieran de cuando en cuando para tomar aliento" (p.135) -, he would now go off into the heart of nature. "Íbase ... a vagar solo por los alrededores del pueblo .... Gustábale detenerse en sus correrías, en un promontorio que dominaba al mar" (p.357). He could now attain a state of spiritual equilibrium through the acquisition of a technique of intrahistoric contemplation: "Sumíale la visión de la inmensa llanura



líquida y palpitante, en la oscura intuición de la vida pura, de la vida sin contenido mayor que la vida misma, y en el extraño sentimiento de la inmovilización del fugitivo instante presente." The contemplative trance would afford him distraction from the motives of existential agonía while the ability to perceive intrahistoria gave him insight into eternity, a Pantheo-Christian blend of eternity. "Desde allí arriba, las ondulaciones de la vasta extensión acababan sugiriéndole el espectáculo de la respiración de la Naturaleza dormida en profundo sueño, sin ensueños. Al sentir otras veces entre mar y cielo el poderoso impulso del viento que levantaba a las olas y barría las nubes, recordaba al Espíritu de Dios incubando sobre las aguas, y se fingía que de un momento a otro apareciese en augusta sombra el Omnipotente Anciano ..." (pp.357-8). In this intermediate 'antithetical' stage he could now objectivize about his previous traumas, the psychological conflict which made his former condition the exclusive patrimony of guerra. "Recogido luego en sí, recorría en su conciencia los combates de ideas que en ella se libraron durante su época de crisis intelectual," those ideas which, "disciplinadas en columnas de argumentos dialécticos, sometidas a la táctica formal de la lógica, y guiadas por la razón, habían llenado su mente con batallas, marchas, contramarchas, encuentros, emboscadas y sorpresas" (p.358). He now realised that, to adopt an intrahistoric analogy, the waves of agony were but the apparenial surface of the tranquil essence embedded in the depths of the sea: "Sobre la quietud tranquila de este mundo mental de imágenes sencillas no resultaban ser aquellos combates más que juego distraído, divertida contienda .... ¿Qué eran aquellas pretendidas angustias de la crisis íntima, cuando se

calmaban, como por ensalmo, al ponerse él a comer, por ejemplo? Mera sugestión, ilusión pura, comedia pura" (p.359). But these surface waves and this comedia are still none the less real. There is a measure of ambiguity in Unamuno's presentation of Pachico at this point, for the young man is not yet definitively free from intellectual crises: "El ejército de sus viejas ideas, que parecía vencido y deshecho, se rehacía a las veces, volviéndole a la carga con impetuoso arranque" (p.358). His contemplative experiences are a real relief and the essential basis of his temperament: an undercurrent of intrahistoric contemplation transcends - (would Unamuno say 'intra-scends'?) - the surface waves of historical agonía. But, equally real are the pangs of spiritual bewilderment which recurred when Pachico learnt of Ignacio's death. "¿Una vida perdida? ¿Perdida ... para quién? ¿Para él, acaso, para el pobre Ignacio?" "Todo el resto del día se lo pasó Pachico ratiocinando sobre la muerte de su pobre amigo. A la noche empezó a verter al papel ... las reflexiones del día; y aunque, al expresarlas hacia fuera, volvió a sentir nudo de angustia en la garganta y en los ojos lágrimas, del hervor de sus sentimientos sólo brotaban ideas escuetas, que al surgir al papel se cristalizaban ..." (p.360). Pachico is thus at a dualistic, antithetical stage in his spiritual development where equilibrium and peacefulness predominate, but not to the exclusion of anguished concern for metaphysical issues. His contemplative nature outweighs, but does not annihilate, his "agonic" self.

The third and ultimate stage in Pachico's development consists in his attaining complete spiritual equilibrium and paz. In the Hegelian sense it is the synthesis of previous opposites, the reconciliation of



antithetical elements and the dialectic resolved. For Pachico (Unamuno) the reaching of a state of ideological and spiritual paz constitutes a solution to the agonizing problem of time as history and temporality.

The lack of precision and balance in the expressions Unamuno used to describe Pachico in his second, ambiguous or dualistic stage is manifested in the narrator's recognition of the continuing existence of the problems the author claimed Pachico had by then already resolved. He now states that "Se le va curando, aunque lentamente y con recaídas, el terror a la muerte, transformado en inquietud por lo estrecho del porvenir; siente descorazonamiento al pensar en lo corto de la vida y lo largo del ideal ... Mas se sacude pronto del 'o todo o nada' de la tentación luciferina" (p.411). Pachico has matured emotionally and intellectually and now has a coherent, if poetic, vision of the world.<sup>13</sup> Nature he sees as an ordered, well-balanced cosmic function, an essentially Darwinian idea imbued, nevertheless, with an idealistic ethic again reminiscent of Hegel: "Contempla Pachico las quietas y apacibles formas de aquella lucha silenciosa, viendo en la paz del bosque la alianza del grande con el pequeño .... La guerra misma se encierra en paz" (p.412). This equilibrium he also finds in man, his experience of life and his relation to the world. In socio-political terms, Pachico sees war as occupying a rightful place in the universal scheme. It is a purposeful historical reality and a conflict between opposite interests, "choque que produce vida, como el de los hielos del Polo y los calores del Trópico en el océano. Muéstrasele ¿a Pachico? la Historia lucha

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<sup>13</sup> Sánchez-Barbudo considers it to be an ultimately specious solution. Estudios sobre Unamuno, Galdós y Machado, cited.

perdurable de pueblos, cuyo fin, tal vez inasequible, es la verdadera unidad del genero humano; lucha sin tregua ni descanso" (p.414). The ethical aspect of this attitude offers a possible analogy with the concept of history in Hegelian idealism, although Hegel's claim that history is a becoming that is rational, conscious and explicable does not appear to be substantiated by Unamuno's theory, with its insistence on the unconscious intrahistoric process. What may be indicated with certainty is the optimistic nature of Pachico's intuitive view of history, for he sees the events of the war, a war organised by the central bureaucratic Liberal government in Madrid, as an acceptable stage in society's development towards an egalitarian community of mankind. Here Unamuno touches also on the Marxist creed and, in effect, correlates the intrahistoric traditionalism of Carlism with the collective idealism illustrated in the communist ethic. Pachico's vision is a fervent expression of the interests of collective humanity, a vision of the intrahistoric - Carlist or communist - essence which lies behind or within the external form of history - the oppressive Liberal régime.<sup>14</sup>

Revelatory contemplation and the intuition of intrahistoric reality have a fundamental effect on Pachico's experience of life in that respect which was central to his agonía: the problem of time.

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<sup>14</sup>See R. Pérez de la Dehesa's Política y sociedad en el primer Unamuno (Madrid: Ciencia Nueva, 1966) and especially "La concepción social y económica de Unamuno y la creación de Paz en la guerra," pp. 167-74. Dehesa considers Unamuno's novel to be the expression of a specific view on politics and history held by the author at that early stage of his career. See also in this respect J.W. Butt's "Determinism and the Inadequacies of Unamuno's Radicalism," Bulletin of Hispanic Studies, XLVI (1969), 226-40.



By living in the intrahistoric dimension of life, man may, not so much possess as, be possessed by eternity and be freed from the fatality of a finite existence. In his mystical union with the One, Pachico "sumerge su mente en la infinita idea de la paz .... Tendido en la cresta ... bajo el insondable azul infinito, el tiempo, engendrador de cuidados, parécele detenerse." These "cuidados", a recurrent word in Unamuno's consciously selected vocabulary which also figures prominently in Heidegger's philosophy implying human existential "care",<sup>15</sup> are to be interpreted as symptoms of an "agonic" consciousness or existential awareness. In Pachico's intrahistoric-contemplative trance, a vision sub specie aeternitatis, "todo se le presenta ... en plano inmenso y tal fusión de términos y perspectivas del espacio llévale poco a poco en el silencio allí reinante, a un estado en que se le funden los términos y perspectivas del tiempo. Olvídase del curso fatal de las horas, y en un instante que no pasa, eterno, inmóvil, siente en la contemplación del inmenso panorama, la hondura del mundo, la continuidad, la unidad, la resignación de sus miembros todos, y oye la canción silenciosa del alma de las cosas desarrollarse en el armónico espacio y melódico tiempo." (pp.414-5). Agonic consciousness disappears: "se le acallan y aquietan las ideas; los cuidados se le borran" (p.415), and his personal, historico-temporal self is fused with the cosmic, eternal Transcendence. "Despiértasele entonces la comunión entre el mundo que le rodea y el que encierra en su propio seno; llegan a la fusión ambos, el inmenso panorama y él, que libertado de la conciencia del lugar y del tiempo, lo contempla, se hacen uno y el mismo, y ... goza de paz verdadera, de una como vida de la muerte." Time as temporality has been overcome and the "agonic" desire for immortality assuaged. This is the climactic,

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<sup>15</sup>F. Meyer, op.cit., wisely advises against over-ambitious comparisons between Unamuno and Heidegger, Sartre and other Existentialist thinkers whom he precedes.

oracular moment for Pachico, when he sees the true nature of the world, man and eternity. Time is revealed to him as the ephemeral form of eternity: "Es la guerra a la paz lo que a la eternidad el tiempo: su forma pasajera. Y en la Paz parecen identificarse la Muerte y la Vida" (p.416). Within Ultimate Peacefulness there is no death, as a separate finite reality, nor is there any after life, for life and death are fused in eternity.

The terminology used here to describe the symbolical intrahistoric structure of existence is identical to that adopted in En torno al casticismo for the purpose of expressing the literal nature of intra-historia. "Así como la tradición es la sustancia de la historia, la eternidad lo es del tiempo, la historia es la forma de la tradición como el tiempo la de la eternidad" (p.186). As guerra is to paz, so time is to eternity and history to tradition and intra-historia. Peacefulness is the underlying (would Unamuno say 'intra-lying'?) substance, the very essence of war, as is eternity that of time. Time, history and guerra only exist as the forms of <sup>trans-</sup><sub>intra-</sub>scendental substances: eternity tradition and paz. Contemplative insight into the nature of these metaphysical essences thus provides a solution to the dilemmas prompted by agonía.<sup>16</sup>

When Pachico descends from the mountain-top, his spiritual condition is optimistic, strong and resolute: "hásele fundido en la montaña la eterna tristeza de las honduras de su alma con la temporal alegría de vivir, brotándole de esta fusión seriedad fecunda." Once more in the city street, "al ver trajinar a las gentes y afanarse en sus trabajos,

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<sup>16</sup> Meyer stresses the naivety of this poetic solution to anguish.



asáltale, cual tentación, la duda de la finalidad eterna de todos aquellos empeños temporales" (p.416). But since he is now in possession of the truth, i.e. his personal "verdad", as a result of his mystical, contemplative intuition of absolute values, he is now immune to the agony-provoking issues which beset his troubled conscience before. "Allí arriba, vencido el tiempo, toma gusto a las cosas eternas, ganando bríos para lanzarse luego al torrente incoercible del progreso, en que rueda lo pasajero sobre lo permanente. Allí arriba, la contemplación serena le da resignación trascendente y eterna, madre de la irresignación temporal, del no contentarse jamás aquí abajo ..." (p.417). He derives a sense of historical purpose from his experience of intrahistorical timelessness; he finds a solution to the problems of transience, finality and temporal consciousness, and time, in all respects, ceases to haunt him as an oppressive nightmare.

It may prove useful to comment briefly here on some similarities and distinctions between Unamuno's theory of intrahistoria and Bergson's durée, a relation to which many commentators of the Spaniard's ideology have drawn attention. Both thinkers profess a belief in an internal, metaphysical organism of the world. They conceive, too, of timelessness in opposition to time, thus aligning themselves with the fundamental tendency of twentieth-century time-philosophy exemplified by the Relativists. Bergson's principle of creativity is paralleled by Unamuno's timeless creative renewal and both theories focus on the structures of human reality in terms of the historicist conception of politico-social development. Yet beyond this general analogy there are some essential points of divergence between the two theories. Unamuno must reject a doctrine which sees an absolute in time itself, since this implies an impersonal,

a-conscious process. The lack of intentional Mind in durée deprives it of purpose or dynamic imagination, whereas from intrahistoria's indispensable element of consciousness derives its forward-looking as well as onward-moving, capacity. A further difference resides in each thinker's appraisal of motion. Durée's quality of dynamic, serial process distinguishes it from the durability of intrahistoria which allows for a paradoxical blend of stasis and motion, essence and appearance. Ultimate essence, consciousness and purpose are issues which affect Unamuno on a spiritual and ideological plane: they are metaphysical issues of anguished concern to him. "Rien n'est plus étranger au philosophe selon Bergson que l'angoisse métaphysique," states André Robinet,<sup>17</sup> recognising a fundamental characteristic of the French philosopher's attitude. The spiritual and emotional basis of Unamuno's postura vital preconditions his irreconcilable divergence from Bergson and ensures that his approach to any philosophical problem will necessarily be in metaphysical terms.

So it is that Pachico's concern with time and timelessness is subordinate to his comprehensive ideological and spiritual critique of the world.

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<sup>17</sup> André Robinet, Bergson et les métamorphoses de la durée, (Paris: Seghers, 1965), p. 177.



Having tried to indicate the thematic depth of Paz en la guerra with specific reference to metaphysical problems, we shall now attempt to establish the formal implications of this special content for the novel's structure.

With regard to its form, Paz en la guerra may be criticized for its slow rhythm and possibly over-ambitious attempt to combine so many interpretations of one basic theme in the vertical structural dimension of the novel. Rafaela and don Miguel, for example, share some characteristics of temperament, one being their attitude to death; neither character is superfluous, but two sets of characteristics could possibly have been combined and attributed as a synthesis to one character, in the interests of artistic economy. In its horizontal dimension, however, the structure is most noteworthy. For it constitutes, in 1897, an early, and we consider successful, attempt to produce an organic interdependence between ideological development and plot-form, i.e., a specific correlation between the novel's thematic and narrative, infra- and supra-structures.

The thematic structure of the novel, representing a development through historia to intrahistoria, is faithfully correlated to, and expressed by, the narrative structure, and this effect is achieved through the use of a deliberate sequence of tenses. Tense, likewise, is to be considered as having a temporal nature and function and as being more than a mere rhetorical device related to the aesthetic problems of narrative presentation and verisimilitude. Tense form, as Roy Pascal has indicated,<sup>18</sup> may also be an analogue of human experience, and in

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<sup>18</sup>Roy Pascal "Tense and Novel", Modern Language Review, LVII (1962), 1-11.

particular of a "lived experience of time".<sup>19</sup> The predominant use in Paz en la guerra of the preterite tense, from the point in the plot where the action becomes non-descriptive and dynamic up to the last two sections of the novel which describe static human experience, may be interpreted as a structuro-stylistic expression of the thematic development traced in the novel. The preterite corresponds to the experience of history and guerra, be it socio-political or metaphysical and ideological. The introduction of a sustained and virtually exclusive sequence of present tenses may correspond to the attainment, at the end of the novel, of a state of intrahistoric peace. Finally, the use of the imperfect tense may also be considered a thematically motivated aspect of the novel. Whilst its function is, in part, that of narrative description, in accordance with traditional technique of fictional presentation, it is also employed to express the routine, intrahistoric aspects of reality and experience. The intrahistoric dimension of existence includes the monotonous details of daily life, as Unamuno stated in "La tradición eterna". "Todo lo que cuentan a diario los periódicos" is nothing more than "la historia toda del 'presente momento histórico'" (p.185); this is a one-sided presentation of historical reality, for "al hablar de un momento presente histórico se dice que hay otro que no lo es, y así es verdad" (p.184). Unamuno defines the dichotomy of history through the analogy of a sea-plant which floats on the surface of the water while rooted in the stable sea-bed: "los periódicos nada dicen de la vida silenciosa de los millones de hombres sin historia que ... se levantan a

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<sup>19</sup>This phrase derives from Jan Miel's "Temporal Form in the Novel," Modern Language Notes, 84 (1969), p. 919.



una orden del sol y van a sus campos a proseguir la oscura y silenciosa labor cotidiana y eterna, esa labor que como la de las madreporas suboceánicas echa las bases sobre que se alzan los islotes de la historia" (p.185).

The adoption of the imperfect tense in certain contexts of Paz en la guerra serves to account for this silent, unobtrusive dimension of reality, the essential 'intra-structure' around and above which is situated the formal super- (extra-) structure of history. "Gracias al imperfecto nos adentramos imaginariamente en la continuidad invariable de un modo de vida "eterno" o "intrahistórico"...," writes Blanco Aguinaga with specific reference to San Manuel Bueno, mártir, in his "Sobre la complejidad de San Manuel Bueno, mártir," (Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica, XV (1961), p. 180).

A superficial glance at the tenses used throughout the novel reveals the existence of this tripartite pattern:

- (1) an initial predominance of imperfects is supplanted by
- (2) (i) a prevalence of preterites, autonomous active tenses incorporated into the actual plane of the plot, with
  - (ii) an undercurrent of imperfects, which is in turn succeeded by
- (3) a predominance of present tense-forms.

Further analysis may lead to a possible explanation of this structural feature, according to which the tense-forms are thematically conditioned.

A preliminary survey of the development, throughout the first chapter, of the novel's four principal structural elements, i.e. the characters: Pedro Antonio, Ignacio, Pachico together with politico-social circumstance, will serve to illustrate this proposal. The

introductory two sections, from pages 75 to 85, serve to present Pedro Antonio and, from the point of view of narrative functionalism,<sup>20</sup> may be considered the static description of circumstantial detail. If, however, tense is also regarded as an autonomous function within the time-structure of a created, but convincingly living, fictional world, the initial predominance of imperfect tenses can be seen to reflect the temporal essence of Pedro Antonio's life, i.e., an organic condition and lived experience. Pedro Antonio's modus vivendi is one of intrahistoric qualities, unconscious, peaceful and rich in memories: "en la monotonía de su vida gozaba ... de la novedad de cada minuto, del deleite de hacer todos los días las mismas cosas y de la plentitud de su limitación. Perdía en la sombra, pasaba inadvertido, disfrutando, dentro de su pelleja como el pez en el agua, la íntima intensidad de una vida de trabajo, oscura y silenciosa, en la realidad de sí mismo, y no en la apariencia de los demás. Fluía su existencia como corriente de río manso, con rumor no oído y de que no se daría cuenta hasta que se interrumpiera" (p.78). The symbolic motifs of water, rain, darkness, shadow and silence, used to describe Pedro Antonio's peaceful existence, are stylistic elements consistently found in Unamuno's depiction of intrahistoria, and are catalogued by Blanco Aguinaga in his analysis of this facet of Unamuno's literary personality. Pedro Antonio's intrahistoric peacefulness is disrupted by two definite events, the outbreak of social strife in 1848: "Descargó la gran tormenta revolucionario del 48" (p.84) and the birth of his son in June 1850. "En junio ... tuvieron un hijo a quien llamaron Ignacio ..." (p.85). The introduction

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<sup>20</sup>In her Die Logik der Dichtung (Stuttgart, 1957), Dr. Kate Hamburger stresses the aesthetic function of tense form as its principal purpose.



of the preterite thus reflects the alteration in the substance of his existence constituted by the intrusion of history.

Ignacio's childhood is also described mainly in the imperfect tense, because childhood is per se an intrahistoric condition. Ignacio was fascinated by legends and tradition, being as yet unsullied by history, and his consciousness was that of pure innocence: "A la evocación de los relatos de su padre dibujábanse en el alma de Ignacio extractos de hombres y de cosas ... y se alzaba en su pecho clamoreo de viejas luchas, brotando en su interior el mundo, su mundo, el mundo de la verdad ..." (p.95). The world of heroic myth, "lleno de sombras que no paran un momento ..., descendía silencioso y confuso, como una niebla, a reposar en el lecho de su espíritu para tomar en éste carne de sueños, e iba enterrándose en su alma sin él darse de ello cuenta" (p.99). The seal of intrahistoric hermeticism is, however, shattered by the assumption of juvenile or pre-adult responsibility and by the loss of sexual innocence; these are homologues of warlike disturbance. The section beginning "Era un domingo de primavera ..." (p.105), and which subsequently embodies a sequence of definitive preterites, relates Ignacio's initiation into the ways of the flesh and his implied emergence from a state of intrahistoria. His life will thenceforth be one where the historical dimension, and consequently the preterite event, prevails. His sub-dominant intrahistoric distractions will, however, be embodied in imperfect verb-forms. For example, when temptation, in the form of a mujerzuela, ceased to torment Ignacio, he returned to the contemplation of nature, a source of peacefulness: "volvió a sus antiguas correrías por los montes, que le daban paz. Envolvía en ellos la calma del campo" (p.112). "Ignacio,

sin conciencia de sí mismo, dejábase penetrar por las voces del valle. Enajenado en lo que le rodeaba, con el alma fuera y abierta al fluir de las impresiones fugitivas, asistía al desfile por ella de pilas de trigo, de gritos infantiles ..." (p.113). Similarly, his visit to the pastoral context of his cousin's village (pp.148-163) enabled him to regain intrahistoric experience. But in the main, Ignacio's energetic, vitalistic temperament and his fascination with war and Carlism condition his preference for an historic more than intrahistoric life-style.

Pachico is accorded a minimum of independence in the first chapter: his introduction is patently the presentation by an omniscient narrator. He appears actively only once throughout the first chapter,<sup>21</sup> so that a specific analysis of the expression, through tense form, of his "lived experience of time" can be postponed for the moment.

In addition to embodying the development of three characters throughout the course of the fictional duration portrayed in it, Paz en la guerra is a documentary-like account of the socio-political circumstances in which the characters live. The novel therefore depicts a sequence of events which belong to a purely historical (in the Unamunian sense) dimension of reality or history. These events are effects of "la historia del presente momento histórico",<sup>22</sup> of the super-, or extra-, structure of temporal reality. Pedro Antonio's peaceful existence is disrupted by the outbreak of "la gran tormenta revolucionaria" (p.84)

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<sup>21</sup>Indeed, Pachico's physical, quantitative presence in the novel is surprisingly little for one who is the key-figure in the thematic structure. This anomaly is one illustration of the novel's artistic imbalance.

<sup>22</sup>En torno al casticismo, p. 185.



in 1848 and the plot continues to embody similar details as its external form or supra-structure: e.g. the revolutionary proclamations of 1867 and the actual revolution of 1868 (p.123) etc. These purely historical events also attain expression through the preterite tense-form. But, as Unamuno claims in "La tradición eterna", below or within the external form of history is the eternal essence of intrahistoria. The troubles of 1868, including the Queen's abandoning Spain, are a motive of thrilling excitement for Juanito and Ignacio, but underneath or inside the commotion of history there remains, Unamuno suggests, the essential, imperturbable peacefulness of intrahistoric nature. "Entonces sintió Ignacio un apretón y oyó la voz de Juanito, que exclamaba alegremente: '¡Ahora se respira!' El aire estaba igual que siempre" (p.210). The affirmation of intrahistoria is embodied in the narrator's immediate, qualifying assurance that nature remained impassive to the throes of socio-political reality. Similarly, an image of intrahistoric supremacy is contained in the depiction of a rural community which Ignacio visits, with the purpose of attending his cousin's wedding. The people here described are the exact fictional equivalents of "los silenciosos" portrayed in En torno al casticismo (pp.185-6): history functions above or outside the limits of their existence. "El día de la Gloriosa había sido para ellos como los demás días ... Viviendo en trato íntimo y cotidiano con la naturaleza, no comprendían la revolución; la costumbre de habérselas con aquella, que procede sin odio y sobre todos llueve lo mismo, les daba resignación ... Dependían de su tierra y de su brazo, sin más mediador entre aquella y éste que el amo, cuyo derecho de propiedad acataban sencillamente, cual un misterio más ..., a él sometidos como al yugo sus bueyes, borrada en su conciencia colectiva la memoria del

arranque de la historia ..." (pp.155-6). Not only do these silent activities occur as imperfect in a past context, they are an eternally present function too: "Labran su vida, y sin desdoblarla reflexivamente, dejan que la fecunde el cielo. Viven estancados por la resignación, inconcios del progreso, con marcha vital tan lenta como el crecimiento de un árbol, que se refleja, inmóvil en aguas, que no siendo ni un momento las mismas, parecen muerto espejo sin embargo" (p.156). This strange combination of tenses is explicable in part by the influence of the stylistic convention of narrative presentation, but it may also be considered a structural function subordinate to thematic considerations of the nature of lived experience.

Thus, by the beginning of the chapter two, the predominant pattern of tense-forms has been established, as has the dual and variable nature of the human experience of time in the novel's fictive world. A combination of imperfect and preterite tense-forms, with the latter prevailing, has replaced the initial sequence of imperfects. Within the thematic structure of the novel, intrahistoria has been disrupted and overtaken by a predominant historical level of reality; this dislodged intrahistorical dimension continues to exist persistently, yet unobtrusively, 'behind the scenes' of history.

This dual experience of time, and its fictional expression through selective use of tense forms, constitutes the basis of the subsequent plot material up to the final two sections, where a state of intrahistoria is regained in its plenitude. This may be seen in Pedro Antonio's development during the central part of the narrative.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Considerations about Pedro Antonio's experience of time may also be applied to Ignacio and the politico-social circumstances. In order to avoid repetition, no reference will be made to these structural elements.



Pedro Antonio invested a large proportion of his savings in the Carlist cause, exhorted his son Ignacio to enlist in Charles' armed forces and eventually left Bilbao for the countryside (p.244). The death of their only son came as a severe blow to him and his wife, but the passing of time helped them lose the tragic, historical consciousness of their grief. Through resignation they both lapsed into a modus vivendi of stagnant routine: Josefa Ignacia "iba difundiendo poco a poco su pena en los actos todos de su vida y en los más humildes sucesos de ella ... Interim Pedro Antonio abandonábase a todo, dejándose mecer en el vaivén suave de los habituales sucesos cotidianos, mientras en el hondón de su alma germinaba poco a poco el dolor ... Pensaba en su pobre hijo de continuo, mas con pensamiento tan lento, tan lento, que parecía inmóvil, en divagación difuminada, y en vaga visión que penetraba sutil en sus pensamientos todos" (pp.361-2). He could obtain relief in the midst of the prevailing historical disturbance by frequenting "los rincones de su niñez"(p.362), the recapturing of childhood through memory being a principal aspect of contemplative-intrahistoric ideology: "A donde iba Pedro Antonio era a pasearse por el vallecito nativo, a cunar su espíritu en la contemplación del contorno" (p.371). He was then shaken out of this state of lethargic nostalgia by an event of collective historical importance, Charles' taking the oath in Guernica on 3rd July 1875: "arrancado a su ensimismamiento por el ambiente de la muchedumbre, parecía despertar de algun letargo" (p.385). Pedro Antonio in this central section, fluctuates between history and intrahistoria, the final event of the section being his wife Josefa Ignacia's death. This was an event of definitive personal historical importance, which paradoxically paved

the way for his ultimate immersion in intrahistoric contemplation at the close of the novel.

The experience of history and intrahistoria has special significance for Pachico, since it is inextricably bound up with metaphysical issues. Ignacio, in whom the vitalistic temperament prevails, is a physically and emotionally motivated character; the socio-political circumstance has no innate, autonomous ideological quality: it is only Pachico, alongside the secondary characters Rafaela and don Miguel, for whom history, time, transient life and eternity have ulterior significance. In the substantial central section Pachico appears only once, pp.356-61. His life is predominantly one of routine, including peaceful communion with nature, but the news of Ignacio's death is an eventful surprise to him: "Cuando supo ... por una carta la muerte de Ignacio, dióle un vuelco el corazón; se dijo ¡pobrecillo! y fué a casa ..." The re-awakening of historical consciousness acquires expression in a preterite verb-form; a sequence of seven preterites illustrates the vividness of Pachico's toma de conciencia: "supo", "dióle un vuelco", "se dijo", "fué", "se encerró", "descubrió" and "perdió", five of the verbs referring to the activity of the human consciousness. Only through fuming his over-active and troubled mind with nature was Pachico able to regain spiritual calm: "Al día siguiente fué a la orilla del mar, donde las olas se rompían ... contando la eterna monodía de su vida sencillo, y allí, ... bajáronle los pensamientos de la víspera a reposar en el fondo fecundo del olvido" (p.361). Immersion in forgetfulness is tantamount to fusion with intrahistoria.

The second section of Paz en la guerra thus incorporates a dual experience of lived time, manifest in the alternation of imperfect and



preterite tense-forms. Pedro Antonio and Pachico's fluctuations between history and intrahistoria, and, analogously, between disturbance and peacefulness, acquire formal expression through this structural procedure.

The thematic duality or antithesis prevalent throughout the novel's extensive middle section is resolved in the final section, beginning on page 408, where the plot-development involves a change of tense-form. Theme and structure are thus of a piece at this crucial turning-point where a state of intrahistoric plenitude is attained, a lived experience of temporal permanence embodied in the present and rendered by the present tense.<sup>24</sup>

Pedro Antonio finally settles in an intrahistoric dimension of existence after the death of Josefa Ignacia, his wife. With the loss of the last element of his personal historical circumstance, he can now fuse his personality, reduced to its purest substance, with nature. His life had consisted of a series of affective personal events: the birth of his son (p.85), the same Ignacio's death (p.347) and the loss of his wife (p.407). His historico-social personality is thus reduced to the minimum of his self and he can, consequently, live exclusively in the eternity of the present: "Desde que enviudó Pedro Antonio, solo en el mundo, vive tranquilo y sin contar sus días, gozándose en despertar cada mañana a la vida sin sobresaltos ni congojas. Su pasado le derrama en el alma una luz tierna y difusa; siente una paz honda, que hace brote de sus recuerdos esperanza de vida eterna. Como ha preservado limpia la temporal, es su vejez un atardecer como una aurora" (p.408). Time's

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<sup>24</sup>Blanco Aguinaga also relates the present tense to the experience of intrahistoria, El Unamuno contemplativo, pp. 64-5.

linearity and transience are refuted in the coexistence of past and present, present and future. Significantly, the only experience which shatters the repose of Pedro Antonio's intrahistoric existence is Pachico's reminding him of Ignacio. "Cruza a menudo en sus paseos con un joven que le saluda respetuosamente. Un día tuvo ocasión de hablar con él, con Pachico, y recordaron a Ignacio, 'un alma hermosa'. El padre se separó conmovido" (p.411). The three preterite verb forms, referring to this intrusion of history, are the only ones in what is otherwise an exclusive sequence of present tenses expressing Pedro Antonio's experience of lived time as eternal presentness.

Analogous to Pedro Antonio's emotion calm is the ideological and spiritual peacefulness which Pachico at last attains at the end of the novel. Pachico has found the solution to the metaphysical dilemma in the contemplation of intrahistoric reality. The fusion of life and death in ultimate Peacefulness removes the nightmarish problem of finality and eternity: "Es la guerra a la paz lo que a la eternidad el tiempo: su forma pasajera. Y en la Paz parecen identificarse la Muerte y la Vida" (p.416). Eternity is, for the Unamuno contemplativo, a durable ever-presentness, which resides "en el fondo del presente"; so Pachico's intuition of eternity and his contemplative peacefulness are an experience in, and of, the present. This lived experience is rendered structurally and stylistically by the use of the present tense from p.411 to the end of the novel on p. 417.

As Blanco Aguinaga indicates, Pachico's assumption of a positive intrahistoric bias is a conscious intellectual experience, in response to the visionary trance in which he intuits eternity, whilst for Pedro Antonio it is an unconscious experience. "Pedro Antonio, un intrahistórico, no



sabe nunca que vive en la inconsciencia, en tanto que Pachico, un racional analítico consciente de su historicidad, sabe, a la vuelta del trance, que ha vivido, enajenado, la inconsciencia de lo eterno" (El Unamuno contemplativo, p.68). As regards the ideologically oriented Pachico, "a su conciencia del hecho histórico ha anadido ya definitivamente su conocimiento directo y positivo de que más allá de la ciudad está la Naturaleza, bajo la Historia la intrahistoria, bajo la conciencia la inconsciencia, bajo la guerra la paz, y que todos estos contrarios se funden y armonizan en una continuidad última en que lo vivo es lo eterno, lo accidental todo lo que depende del Tiempo" (p.72). The same critic might well have pointed out the difference in motivation between the two characters, Pachico the rationalist susceptible to philosophical guerra, and Pedro Antonio the emotional quietist, vulnerable on an unconscious sentimental level. For, while they share a basic concern for life, time and death as concrete aspects of human existence, the nature of this concern is radically different.

We have emphasised Pachico's importance in the novel's thematic structure because of this difference, for his concern is conscious and rational and with the problematical implications of human experience of time. Pedro Antonio's developing experience and ultimate attainment of calm (paz) and equilibrium serve as both a thematic and structural complement to Pachico's. It is, then, for this reason that we have consistently referred to a character who, per se, has no direct relation to the essential metaphysical and spiritual theme. When seen in the perspective of Pedro Antonio's more simple experience of life and time, and his less dramatic reaction to the human problems of transience and

finality, the ideological basis of Pachico's attitude to life is stressed in comparison, and with it his basic agonía.

A solution for Pachico's agonía, and for Pedro Antonio's emotional unrest, is found at the end of the novel. The characters' temporal experience culminates in the attainment of an intrahistoric presentness. The tense form is the internal structural homologue of this thematic dimension of human existence depicted in Paz en la guerra. It expresses the variation of what Michel Butor has termed "le temps de l'aventure" of a novel,<sup>25</sup> and both illustrates and justifies Paul Goodman's emphasising "the importance of the experience in the internal structure" of a novel.<sup>26</sup> For Pachico, this experience is temporal in form and metaphysical in content, an experience which is the first fully-developed fictional embodiment of Unamuno's cardinal themes: life, death, time, finality (the data of existence), conscious agonía and unconscious contemplation (the two possible reactions) and history and intrahistoria (the two possible frameworks of human experience).

With the aid of the conclusions reached in this interpretation of the form and content of Paz en la guerra, with particular reference to the "temps de l'aventure" which constitutes the novel's horizontal structure and its relation to the central theme of the human adaptation to time, history and intrahistory, a schematic plan can be designed to represent the correspondence between human experience and its formal expression through a coherent system of verb-forms:

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<sup>25</sup> Michel Butor, Essais sur le roman (Paris: Gallimard, 1969), p.112.

<sup>26</sup> Paul Goodman, The Structure of Literature (University of Chicago Press, 1954), p. 4.



VERTICAL STRUCTURE

Plot-line	Initial experience of time	Tense expression	Central development	Tense	Final experience	Tense
Pachico	<u>Intrahistoria</u>	Imperfect	Conscious <u>historia</u> + subordinate <u>intra-historia</u>	Preterite	Intrahistoric eternity	Present
Pedro Antonio	<u>Intrahistoria</u>	Imperfect	<u>Historia</u> + intrahistoric undercurrent	Preterite + imperfect	Intrahistoric timelessness	Present
Ignacio	<u>Intrahistoria</u>	Imperfect	<u>Historia</u> + Ultimate immersion in intrahistoric Paz	Preterite + imperfect		
Spain	No direct, actual role in the plot		Predominance of history + pueblo's intrahistorical continuity	Preterite + imperfect	A potential impulse of intrahistoric utopian purpose	Present (pp. 405-6)
In Hegelian terms	Thesis		Antithesis		Synthesis	

HORIZONTAL DIMENSION OF STRUCTURE

Paz en la guerra may as a result be construed, in contrast to Eugenio de Nora's view of it, as a novel of ideological content. We have tried to indicate a correspondence between the thematic and narrative structures, emphasising the role of the theme of time and history. We have at the same time made particular reference to the nature of the human experience of time and have suggested that in *Pachico*, Unamuno has depicted the reaction of an anguished human being to a specific aspect of the existential dilemma, that is, to the problems of time's transience and finality. While commenting on the possibly unsound basis of poetic intuition upon which *Pachico*'s solution to agonia is grounded - the ending of the novel is naively optimistic and idealistic in tone -, we have nevertheless stressed the authenticity of the contemplative attitude. In aesthetic terms, attention has been drawn to a basic formal anomaly in the novel and to the resultant lack of balance from which it suffers on occasions. We have not, however, allowed this recognition of these technical flaws to prejudice our view of the work's structure as an ambitious experiment in the correlation of form and content, and a noteworthy achievement in the creation of an essentially chronomorphous novel.



## CHAPTER II

Azorín's La voluntad: the Structural Expression  
of Metaphysical Distraction in Time

"¿Qué es la vida? ¿Qué fin tiene la vida? ¿Qué hacemos aquí abajo? ¿Para qué vivimos? No lo sé; esto es imbécil, abrumadoramente imbécil. Hoy siento más que nunca la eterna y anonadante tristeza de vivir. No tengo plan, no tengo idea, no tengo finalidad ninguna. Mi porvenir se va frustrando lentamente, fríamente, sigilosamente. ¡Ah, mis veinte años! ¿Dónde está la ansiada y soñada gloria?" So begins the first chapter of Azorín's Diario de un enfermo, which he published in 1901.<sup>1</sup> The passage is a startling exposition of the author's existential anguish at a time when it was an overpowering reality defying solution. With the acquisition of a more mature temperament and philosophical outlook, Azorín was eventually to find a solution to the metaphysical dilemma through Art. Diario de un enfermo (1901), La voluntad (1902), Antonio Azorín (1903) and Confesiones de un pequeño filósofo (1904), contain ideas which prefigure that aesthetic mode. However, they also include much which is ultimately incompatible with the final serene and humoristic attitude. Doris King Arjona convincingly states that "in Azorín appears more starkly than in the other individualists [of the '98] the dreary philosophical background of the end of the century," and that "in the nihilism of Azorín the pessimism of his epoch reaches its extreme."<sup>2</sup> The existential dilemma must be considered the principal

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<sup>1</sup>All references will henceforth be to the Aguilar edition of the Obras completas (Madrid, 1959), volumes I and II.

<sup>2</sup>Doris King Arjona, "La voluntad and abulia in Contemporary Spanish Ideology," Revue Hispanique, LXXIV (1928), 632 and 640.

factor which conditions the content, tone and form of Azorín's initial works.

The same chapter of Diario de un enfermo continues with a central statement of the theme of time in relation to human existence, a fundamental aspect of Azorín's anguish. "Dentro de mil millones de siglos, ¿existirá siquiera el tiempo?" the Sick Man wonders, pessimistically reflecting thereafter on the transient instability of all forms of life. "Nada es eterno; todo cambia, todo pasa, todo perece. Cuando pase la Tierra, y pase el Universo, y pase el Tiempo, el mismo implacable Tiempo que lo hace pasar todo," what will there be left of human life? These sombre considerations lead him once more to the precarious uncertainty of analysis: "¿Qué es la vida? ¿Para qué venimos a la tierra unos después de otros, durante siglos y siglos, y luego desaparecemos todos y desaparece la Tierra? ¿Para qué?" Such thoughts can only produce a condition of desperate scepticism, the frame of mind in which the Sick Man completes that day's entry in his diary: "Mi tristeza se pronuncia de una manera dolorosa. Estoy jadeante de melancolía; siento la angustia metafísica" (Obras, I, 694).

The problem of time, as critics have consistently indicated, is at the very core of Azorín's philosophy. Daniel Pageaux, for example, refers to it as a "tyrannique, obsédant, angoissant" element of his vital concern;<sup>3</sup> Ana Krause comments: "Time and eternity - the supreme preoccupation of ... Azorín."<sup>4</sup> It is essential to qualify these

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<sup>3</sup>Pageaux, "La confrontation du passé et de l'actuel chez Azorín," Modern Language Notes, LXXVII (1962), 210.

<sup>4</sup>Ana Krause, Azorín, The Little Philosopher (Inquiry into the Birth of a Literary Personality). Berkeley, University of California Publications in Modern Philology, vol. XXVIII, no. 4 (1948).



generalising judgments with the reservation that Azorín's attitude to time altered significantly during his life-time, in line with the overall development of his Weltanschauung. Azorín's critics have hitherto over-emphasised the aesthetic nature of his concern with time. Leon Livingstone claims that "las novelas de Azorín ... se desarrollan alrededor de un tema básico: la naturaleza del arte y en particular de la novela."<sup>5</sup> The American critic has as his central concern Azorín's "estética de reposo"<sup>6</sup> as first expressed in Diario de un enfermo, and approaches the problem of time from this standpoint: "El enfoque del problema en estos términos de tiempo-sensación refuerza la convicción de que para Azorín el conflicto entre las exigencias de la realidad y la aspiración mística a lo ultrarreal no es esencial ni primordialmente filosófico ni religioso, sino pura y simplemente un problema estético" (p.84). We must insist on the dogmatic and over-simplified nature of this assertion. It is true that Azorín does eventually find a source of beauty in time and temporal experience, but this in no way holds good for La voluntad. The validity of Livingstone's deliberate emphasis on "la índole esencialmente estética de la constante preocupación azoriniana por el tiempo" (p.115), is called seriously into question if one accepts Doris King Arjona's interpretation of the early novels.

Ana Krause, the authoress of Azorín, the Little Philosopher, makes two valuable contributions to the essential topic of Azorín's interest in the temporal aspect of the human condition. The first

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<sup>5</sup>Livingstone, Tema y forma en las novelas de Azorín. (Madrid: Gredos, 1970), p. 13.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 70 ff.

refers to the relation between the Spaniard's thought and that of Jean-Marie Guyau, a rapport first recognised by Carlos Clavería.<sup>7</sup> Mrs. Krause concludes that the main thesis of Guyau's study is "an invitation to imitate the poetic procedé of memory which transforms by beautifying" (p.238). This is indeed the foremost point of contact between the two writers, but the critic fails to mention the alternative interest of Guyau's work. Although it is quantitatively only a secondary aspect of his theory, there is in fact a marked element of metaphysical content in Guyau's La genèse de l'idée de temps. This point is a valuable contribution to our argument and will be dealt with in detail at a later stage of this study. Second, Mrs. Krause refers to the appearance in Azorín's work of the Nietzschean idea of eternal recurrence. A point of interest lies in the interpretation of the theory of Eternal Return. César Barja, whom Ana Krause recognises as the first critic to have mentioned the Nietzschean idea in relation to Azorín's work, is of the opinion that "in Azorín one finds the poetical rather than the philosophical implications of the concept."<sup>8</sup> This claim must necessarily be qualified in keeping with the argument of this thesis. In Doña Inés (1925), the principle of Eternal Return is indeed a factor of poetical value, but it must be emphasised that the concept of recurrence as expressed in La voluntad responds to a motivation on the author's part which is primarily philosophical.

Ana Krause also discusses the question of the structural

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<sup>7</sup>Carlos Clavería, "Sobre el tema del tiempo en Azorín," in Cinco estudios de literatura española moderna (Salamanca, 1945), pp. 49-67.

<sup>8</sup>Ana Krause, Azorín, the Little Philosopher, p. 230.



application of the Nietzschean idea and states that it is in Las Confesiones de un pequeño filósofo that "Eternal recurrence finds its first expression as a literary motif"(p.236). We believe that there is already a pattern of repetition and recurrence in the structure of La voluntad which was written 2 years before Las confesiones ..., and that the novel's action is, in fact, a metaphor of time and temporal experience, or, in the words of Eleanor Hutchens, a "chronomorph". Some explicit statement about the nature of literary plotting by the author of La voluntad substantiates this view. We shall refer to this in the second section of this chapter.

Time as a general theme is formally presented as Problematic in this early novel: it haunts, perplexes and defeats Azorín the protagonist. An analysis of the content, tone, rhythm and structure of La voluntad, with secondary reference to three other early works, Diario de un enfermo, Antonio Azorín and Las confesiones..., will indicate the subordination of all these aspects of the novel to the chronomorphic principle.

Antonio Azorín's Weltanschauung is formed by his education at the hands of Yuste, a sombre, doom-predicting sexagenarian "de palabra enérgica, pesimista, desoladora, colérica, iracunda ..." (p.814). Yuste's own thought is reminiscent of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Montaigne, to name the most prominent figures that Azorín the author mentions. At the heart of both master and disciple's pessimistic Weltanschauungen and metaphysical uncertainty is the excess of analytical reason which Schopenhauer bewailed in his assertion that "Spiritual pain is conditional upon knowledge ... The reason man's life is more full of

suffering than the animal's is his greater capacity for knowledge."<sup>9</sup> Azorín and Yuste have both tasted the poisonous and indigestible fruit of the tree of knowledge, and thus represent the contemporary philosophical distemper. "Soy un hombre de mi tiempo," exclaims Azorín: "la inteligencia se ha desarrollado a expensas de la voluntad ..." (p.968). In this respect, he is a tailor-made illustration of what J. Huizinga has called "the pivotal point of the present crisis of civilisation: the conflict between knowing and being, between intelligence and existence".<sup>10</sup> Azorín simply fails to synthesise the two faculties in harmonious unity. The happiness of the innocent mind is denied both him and Yuste. On his death-bed, the master protests "¡Ah, la inteligencia es el mal! ... Comprender es entristecerse; observar es sentirse vivir ... Y sentirse vivir es sentir la inexorable marcha de todo nuestro ser y de las cosas que nos rodean hacia el océano misterioso de la Nada" (p.898). The aged man of letters dies in excruciating spiritual pain, whilst outside the farm labourers, "hombres sencillos", calmly pursue their task of tending the land: the fruit of the tree of life makes them "hombres felices".

In this declaration Yuste explains for the last time his much-voiced conviction in time's unceasing erosion. For Schopenhauer, time is implicit in the force which tyrannises the material world, Will:

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<sup>9</sup>Schopenhauer, Essays and Aphorisms, selected by R. Hollingdale (Penguin, 1970), p. 46.

<sup>10</sup>Huizinga, In the Shadow of Tomorrow, p. 81.



"Not the least of the torments which plague our existence is the constant pressure of time, which never lets us so much as draw breath but pursues us all like a taskmaster with a whip."<sup>11</sup> Yuste constantly repeats that change, loss and decay are absolute in the world: "Todo pasa, Azorín; todo cambia y perece," he tells his disciple (p.814). Man occupies a helpless position in this cosmic scheme, "fundados en la concausalidad inexorable, en el ciego determinismo de las cosas" (p.824). Azorín professes a similar attitude to the world and time: "Todo pasa brutalmente, inexorablemente" (p.941), he muses, while walking through Madrid. He describes himself as "un determinista convencido", believing that "El Universo es un infinito encadenamiento de causas y concausas; todo es necesario y fatal ... Los átomos son inexorables. Ellos llevan las cosas en combinaciones incomprensibles hacia la Nada" (pp. 932-3). The convinced nihilist comes to the conclusion that action is a fruitless pursuit in the midst of nature's intractable process of futility, for the medium crushes the individual's attempts at self-assertion or self-realization. Life, and the temporal present, is thus deprived of its dynamic and reduced to a monotonous condition of passivity.

Within the temporal structure of human life, man, with his subjective experience and responses, is pitted against relentlessly transient objective externals. One of Azorín's characteristic preoccupations, in line with the Heraclitean theme of irreparable transience, is the disheartened sense that "siempre es tarde." The author of the

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<sup>11</sup> Schopenhauer, Essays and Aphorisms, p. 42.

Confesiones ... inquires: "¿Por qué es tarde? ¿Para qué es tarde? ¿Qué empresa vamos a realizar que exige de nosotros esta rigurosa contabilidad de los minutos? ¿Qué destino secreto pesa sobre nosotros que nos hace desgranar uno a uno los instantes en estos pueblos estáticos y grises? Yo no lo sé; pero yo os digo que esta idea de que siempre es tarde es la idea fundamental de mi vida; no sonriáis. Y que si miro hacia atrás, veo que a ella le debo esta ansia inexplicable, este apresuramiento por algo que no conozco, esta febrilidad, este desasosiego, esta preocupación tremenda y abrumadora por el interminable sucederse de las cosas a través de los tiempos"(ed. cit., II, 43). Azorín laments the relentless transience of life and time and its effect on the personality. The Sick Man complains of the exaggerated and oppressive effect of metropolitan life: "La personalidad, incapaz del esfuerzo grande y sostenido, se disuelve. Todo es rápido, fugaz, momentáneo ... Nos falta el tiempo" (Diario..., pp. 701-2). "Siempre es tarde," the Little Philosopher might add. Since the present is ephemeral and the future an unknown quantity, only the past is accorded stability and definition: but the past is separate from the actual plane of experience. The divorce of the past, implying lack of continuity, is a motive of distress for the individual who is concerned with attaining full and coherent experience of life and time. Time provides and then dispossesses within a vicious circle: past fulfilment and sufficiency immediately become present necessity and deficiency. Schopenhaurian Will tortures man with "el dolor del deseo incumplido", but "más angustioso todavía," Azorín decides, is "el dolor ... del deseo satisfecho..." (p.940). Nothing is reliable or stable in the flux of time: the past is irreparably lost, a motive for human disenchantment.



Azorín's visit to the transparently symbolic Rastro illustrates his utterly negative appraisal of the past: "siente cierta vaga tristeza en este inmenso y rumoroso cementerio de cosas, que representan pasados deseos, pasadas angustias, pasadas voluptuosidades" (p.994).

The future is as oppressive a nightmare as the past. A fundamental, agonising problem caused by the collapse of faith in God, progress or any absolute is the issue of finality. "¡Esta vida es una cosa absurda! ¿Cuál es la causa final de la vida?" Azorín remonstrates in La voluntad (p.694). It is an anxious concern he shares with Unamuno, Gide and many subsequent writers like Borges and Sartre, but it is a concern which is only human. Puche the priest sombrely acknowledges that "en el ansioso afán del mundo, la inquietud del momento futuro nos consume .... La Humanidad perece en sus propias inquietudes" (p.811). Azorín, as protagonist, impatiently claims that man brings torture upon himself through excessive concern with the future: "si la Humanidad se decidiera a renunciar a este estúpido deseo de continuación, viviría siquiera un día plenamente, enormemente.... Sólo entonces esto que llamaba Schopenhauer la voluntad cesará de ser, cesará por lo menos en su estado consciente, que es el hombre" (p.974). But Humanity cannot renounce its 'forward-reaching' faculty without destroying its basic psychology. Finality remains a problematical but necessary concern.

Three teleological possibilities are suggested in La voluntad, whilst death is admitted as the one categorical certainty. Puche, in oracular strain, upholds the Christian apocalyptic view that "tiempo vendrá en que la justicia suprema reine implacable.... La cólera divina desbordaráse en castigos enormes. Sí, la angustia de los soberbios será indecible. Un grito de inmenso dolor partirá de la Humanidad

aterrorizada... y los mundos, trastornados de sus esferas, perecerán en espantables desquiciamientos.... Y del siniestro caos, tras la confusión del juicio último, manará serena la luz de la Verdad Infinita" (p.812). Yuste, the vehement atheist who rejects both a first and a final cause for the world, foresees no such cataclysmic Day of Judgment and ensuing beatific Eternity: "La eternidad no existe. Donde hay eternidad no puede haber vida. Vida es sucesión; sucesión es tiempo. Y el tiempo, cambiante siempre, es la antítesis de la eternidad, presente siempre" (p.815). On his death-bed Yuste repeats his sinister assurance that man and phenomena are destined to go on moving towards Nothingness. Yuste also sceptically suggests that the world and time might function as a cyclical process, in perpetual transformation and renovation: "Todo pasa. La sucesión vertiginosa de los fenómenos no acaba. Los átomos, en eterno movimiento, crean y destruyen formas nuevas. A través del tiempo infinito, de las infinitas combinaciones del átomo incansable, acaso las formas se repitan; acaso las formas presentes vuelvan a ser, o estas presentes sean reproducción de otras en el infinito pretérito creadas" (p.815). Azorín draws on Nietzsche's theory of the Eternal Return<sup>12</sup> though not without subjecting it to certain alterations, the main of which consists in the substitution of the idea of repetition for that of return. "La repetición monótona e inexorable de las mismas cosas con distintas apariencias"<sup>13</sup> satisfies Azorín's search for both identity and variety within time, since pure return would imply undifferentiated, identical and therefore static immutability. The theory

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<sup>12</sup>See Gonzalo Sobejano, Nietzsche en España (Madrid: Gredos, 1967).

<sup>13</sup>Anderson Imbert, "El pasado literario de Azorín," Nosotros, LXII (1930), 278.



of cosmic cycles affords a terminus ad quem to temporal evolution. But this is only the semblance of finality, for the lack of ultimate, transcendent purpose is as much a characteristic of a cyclical, as it is of a linear, process of time. Although it assuages the human desire for immanent continuity, the theory of eternal return may also be the source of anguish, as it offers no solution to time's implacable on-rushing process. "Lo doloroso es que esta danza durará millares de siglos, millones de siglos, millones de millones de siglos. Será eterna." The author of La voluntad refers to the "sentimiento de inmenso entusiasmo, mezclado de un indecible horror" (p.935) which Nietzsche felt upon the discovery of the principle, for the very possibility which had seemed an antidote to metaphysical anguish now threatened to magnify and prolong that anguish to infinity. For a theory of infinite temporal recurrence implies a total negation of potential and progress, two concepts so central to the Christian world of the West. Karl Löwith has described the idea of eternal repetition as "a stumbling block and foolishness to modern man"<sup>14</sup> because of its negative historical and spiritual value. No less awe-inspiring is the third teleological possibility expressed in La voluntad, the prediction of a definitive entropy-process leading towards total holocaust. Azorín speculates on cosmic physics: "los átomos se combinan de otra manera y dan nacimiento a un mundo flamante. ¿Y así hasta lo infinito? Parece ser que no; un físico alemán ... opina que la materia perderá al fin su energía potencial y quedará

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<sup>14</sup>K. Löwith, "Nietzsche's Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence," cited, p. 274.

inservible para nuevas transformaciones." E.Inman Fox credibly suggests that Azorín is in fact referring here to an Austrian scientist, Ludwig Boltzmann, who "introdujo la noción de la probabilidad en la entropía (una teoría originalmente termo-dinámica), así sugiriendo la pérdida de energía."<sup>15</sup> Whereas Christian apocalypse paves the eschatological way for a beatific after-life, and the Vuelta Eterna affords the means of infinite continuity, this scientific theory of entropy is a brutally definitive reductio ad nihil. Yet perhaps some paradoxical consolation might be drawn from its prediction of this utter finiteness: "Digno remate. ¡Espectáculo sorprendente! La materia gastada de tanta muchedumbre de mundos permanecerá (¿dónde?) eternamente como un inmenso montón de escombros .... Y esta hipótesis, digna de ser axioma, que se llama la entropía del universo, al fin es un consuelo; es la promesa, un poco larga, ¡ay!, del reposo de todo, de la muerte de todo." (p.975). Small consolation, though, for Western civilisation with its traditional teaching of purpose and end: as Huizinga remarks, "a fundamental feature of culture is that ... it is directed towards an aim ..."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Inman Fox, ed. La voluntad (Madrid: Clásicos Castalia, 1968), p.276. Entropy is also mentioned in pt. 1, chapter 3, of the novel.

<sup>16</sup>Huizinga, In the Shadow of Tomorrow, p. 27. Michael Harrington, in his The Accidental Century (Pelican, 1967), points out that "The West has marked itself off from other cultures precisely by its confidence in the future. The religious form of this faith is most readily identified with St. Augustine, who, breaking with the cyclic theories in which time was thought of as a great wheel turning around on itself, asserted the pilgrimage of history towards the City of God. The secular version of the same hope dates at least from the Renaissance and culminates in the capitalist and socialist visions of progress" (p.219). The socialist vision does in fact appear in La voluntad, but from the status of an incipient ideal it deteriorates, perhaps predictably, into one of the many "iniciaciones paralizadas, audacias frustradas" (p.995) of Azorín and Yecla's history. See pages 822, -26 and -95 for examples of worthy plans doomed to failure.



The general view of life and time expressed in La voluntad is profoundly pessimistic: the past is lost, the present precarious and the future ominous. This negative judgment derives primarily from Schopenhauer and Taine, but its origin may also be found in the melancholy works of Jean-Marie Guyau whom Carlos Clavería, Ana Krause, Leon Livingstone and Inman Fox, inter al., have recognised as a fundamental influence on Azorín's attitude to time.<sup>17</sup> Guyau's theory of memory and time-consciousness is reflected in Azorín's later novels where the aesthetic mode predominates, but there are also correspondences between his ideas and the Spaniard's concern with the metaphysical aspects of time. "L'idée du temps, à elle seule, est le commencement du regret," states Guyau in his treatise La genèse de l'idée de temps.<sup>18</sup> "Le regret, le remords, c'est la solidarité du présent avec le passé ..." (p.82), he continues. The general regret and remorse to which Guyau here refers in the clinical mood appropriate to a scientific treatise prove to be sentiments of a most notable nature when expressed in poetic form. In his poem "Le Temps", included in Vers d'un Philosophe, Guyau relates the theme of time to a framework of metaphysical discontent. We reproduce the text here in full.

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<sup>17</sup>See bibliography.

<sup>18</sup>We refer to the 1923 edition published in Paris by Felix Alcan.

## LE TEMPS

## I

## Le Passé

Nous ne pouvons penser le temps sans en souffrir.  
 En se sentant durer, l'homme se sent mourir:  
 Ce mal est ignoré de la nature entière.  
 L'oeil fixe sur le sol, dans un flot de poussière,  
 Je vois passer là-bas, en troupe, de grands boeufs;  
 Sans jamais retourner leurs têtes en arrière,  
 Ils s'en vont à pas lourds, souffrants, non malheureux;  
 Ils n'aperçoivent pas la longue ligne blanche  
 De la route fuyant devant eux, derrière eux,  
 Sans fin, et dans leur front que sous le fouet se penche  
 Nul reflet du passé n'éclaire l'avenir.  
 Tout se mêle pour eux. Parfois je les envie:  
 Ils ne connaissent point l'anxieux souvenir,  
 Et vivent sourdement, en ignorant la vie.  
 L'autre jour j'ai revu la petite maison  
 Que jadis j'habitai là-haut sur la colline,  
 Avec la grande mer au loin pour horizon.  
 J'y suis monté gaiement: toujours on s'imagine  
 Qu'on aura du plaisir à troubler le passé,  
 À le faire sortir, étonné, de la brume.  
 Puis, pensais-je, mon cœur ici n'a rien laissé:  
 J'ai vécu, voilà tout, j'ai souffert, j'ai pensé,  
 Tandis que, devant moi, l'éternelle amertume  
 De la mer frémissante ondoyait sous les cieux.  
 Je ne portais, caché dans mon sein, d'autre drame  
 Que celui de la vie: en saluant ces lieux,  
 Pourquoi donc se fondit soudain toute mon âme?

C'était moi-même, hélas, moi que j'avais perdu.  
 Oh! comme j'étais loin! et quelle ombre montante  
 Déjà m'enveloppait à demi descendu  
 Sous le lourd horizon de la vie accablante?

Des profondeurs en moi s'ouvraient à mon regard,  
 Vivre! est-il donc au fond rien de plus implacable?  
 S'écouler sans savoir vers quel but, au hasard,  
 Se sentir maîtrisé par l'heure insaisissable.

Nous allons devant nous comme des exilés,  
 Ne pouvant pas fouler deux fois la même place,  
 Goûter la même joie, et sans cesse appelés  
 Par l'horizon nouveau que nous ouvre l'espace.



Oh! quand nous descendons au fond de notre coeur,  
Combien de doux chemins à travers nos pensées,  
De recoins parfumés où gazouillent en chœur  
Les vivants souvenirs, voix des choses passées!

Comme nous voudrions, ne fût-ce qu'un moment,  
Revenir en arrière et, frissonnants d'ivresse,  
Parcourir de nouveau le méandre charmant  
Que creuse en s'écoulant dans nos coeurs la jeunesse!

Mais non, notre passé se ferme pour toujours,  
Je sens que je deviens étranger à ma vie;  
Lorsque je dis encor: - mes plaisirs, mes amours,  
Mes douceurs, - puis-je ainsi parler sans ironie?

Que d'impuissance éclate en ce mot tout humain!  
Se souvenir! - se voir lentement disparaître,  
Sentir vibrer toujours comme l'écho lointain  
D'une vie à laquelle on ne peut plus renaître!

Tout ce monde déjà perdu que j'ai peuplé  
Avec mon âme même au hasard dispersée,  
Avec l'espoir joyeux de mon coeur envolé,  
En vain j'y veux encor attacher ma pensée:  
Tout par degrés s'altère en ce mouvant tableau.  
Je m'échappe à moi-même! avec effort je tente  
De renouer les fils de ce doux echeveau  
Qui fut ma vie hélas! je sens ma main tremblante  
Se perdre en ce passé que je voulais fouiller.  
Quand, après un long temps, je revois le visage  
Des amis qui venaient s'asseoir près du foyer,  
Je m'étonne: mon âme hésite et se partage  
Entre ses souvenirs et la réalité.  
Je les reconnais bien, et pourtant je me trouve  
Inquiet auprès d'eux, presque désenchanté;  
Peut-être éprouvent-ils aussi ce que j'éprouve:  
Tous, en nous retrouvant, nous nous cherchons encor.  
Entre nous est venu se placer tout un monde;  
Nous appelons en vain ce cher passé qui dort,  
Nous attendons, naïfs, qu'il s'éveille et réponde;  
Lui, sous le temps que monte à jamais submergé,  
Il reste pâle et mort; tout est encor le même,  
Je crois, autour de nous; en nous tout est changé;  
Notre réunion semble un adieu suprême.

## II

## L'Avenir

Un matin, je partis, seul, pour gravir un mont,  
 La nuit voilait encor la montagne sereine,  
 Mais on sentait venir le jour; pour prendre haleine,  
 Je retournai la tête; un gouffre si profond  
 Se creusa sous mes pieds, dans l'ombre plus limpide,  
 Qu'une angoisse me prit, et, dompté par l'effroi,  
 Sentant battre mon coeur au vertige du vide,  
 Je restais à sonder le gouffre ouvert sous moi.  
 Enfin, avec effort, je relevai la tête.  
 Partout le roc à pic pendait comme un mur noir;  
 Mais là-haut, tout là-haut, lointain comme l'espoir,  
 Je vis dans ce ciel pur monter le libre faite.  
 Il semblait tressaillir au soleil matinal;  
 Portant à son côté son glacier de cristal,  
 Il se dressait rougi d'une aurore sublime.  
 Alors j'oubliai tout, l'âpre roc à gravir,  
 La fatigue, la nuit, le vertige, l'abîme  
 Au fond duquel, dormant comme le souvenir,  
 Un lac vert s'allongeait environné de glace:  
 D'un élan, sans quitter la montagne des yeux,  
 Sentant revivre en moi la volonté tenace,  
 J'escaladai le roc, et je croyais, joyeux,  
 Voir ma force grandir en approchant des cieux.

Vide profond et sourd qu'en nos coeurs le temps laisse,  
 Abîme du passé, toi dont la vue oppresse  
 Et donne le vertige à qui t'ose sonder,  
 Je veux, pour retrouver ma force et ma jeunesse,  
 Loin de toi, le front haut, marcher et regarder!  
 Jours sombres ou joyeux, jeunes heures fanées,  
 Évanouissez-vous dans l'ombre des années;  
 Je ne pleurerai plus en vous voyant flétrir,  
 Et, laissant le passé fuir sous moi comme un rêve,  
 J'irai vers l'inconnu séduisant qui se lève,  
 Vers ce vague idéal qui point dans l'avenir,  
 Cime vierge et que rien d'humain n'a pu ternir.  
 Je suivrai mon chemin, marchant où me convie  
 Ma vision lointaine, erreur ou vérité:  
 Tout ce que l'aube éclaire encore, a la beauté;  
 L'avenir fait pour moi tout le prix de la vie.  
 Me semble-t-il si doux parce qu'il est très loin?  
 Et lorsque je croirai, lumineuse espérance,  
 Te toucher de la main, ne te verrai-je point  
 Tomber et tout à coup te changer en souffrance?  
 Je ne sais ... C'est encor de quelque souvenir



Que me vient cette crainte en mon coeur renaissante;  
 Quelque déception d'autrefois m'épouvante,  
 Et d'après mon passé je juge l'avenir.  
 Oublions et marchons. L'homme, sur cette terre,  
 S'il n'oubliait jamais, pourrait-il espérer?  
 J'aime à sentir sur moi cet éternel mystère, -  
 L'avenir, - et sans peur je veux y pénétrer;  
 Le bonheur le plus doux est celui qu'on espère.

There are some close similarities between "Le temps" and certain passages of Azorín's Diario de un enfermo, La voluntad, and Antonio Azorín. A common initial premise, and one that is reminiscent of Schopenhauer, is that man has a potentially tragic awareness of life and time as a result of his intellect, whilst animals would be spared this preoccupation: "Ce mal est ignoré de la nature entière," Guyau writes. The young Azorín discovers a dog in a cafeteria and decides that "este perro sin noción del tiempo, sin sospechas de la inmanencia o trascendencia de la causa primera, es más sabio que Aristóteles, Spinoza y Kant ..." (p.920). Subsequently, Azorín could find an illustration, in Guyau's works and in this specific poem in particular, of the following themes: the void of temporal existence, the past as separate experience and life as successive fragmentation; human susceptibility to disquieting memory and terror of the future; and the individual's senses of loss, deficient continuity of personality, personal perplexity and self-alienation.

Guyau stresses man's tragic susceptibility to "l'anxieux souvenir" (1. 13). Through his awareness of the past, man becomes conscious of vital change and transience and, inevitably, "en se sentant durer, l'homme se sent mourir" (1. 2). The poet-philosopher then illustrates this point by describing how he revisited "la petite maison que j'habitai là-haut sur la colline" - a situation strikingly similar to that in

which Azorín imagines he might "volver a un lugar (una casa, un paisaje)" (p.941). The poet realised upon his return that there was a mysterious void between his past and his present circumstances: "c'était moi-même que j'avais perdu"(l. 28). The central image of the "vide", the "abîme" and "le gouffre ouvert sous moi" suggests an analogy with the Symbolist topos of the dread-inspiring void, a primarily philosophical notion. In "Le temps", Guyau is dealing with problematical issues which affect the human race and the individual being. An individual's experience of time entails a grave problem of personality, for transience and destitution are of a piece: "le moi échappe à nos prises comme une illusion, un rêve; il se disperse, il se résout dans une multitude de sensations fuyantes, et nous le sentons avec une sorte de vertige s'engloutir dans l'abîme mouvant du temps" (La genèse de l'idée..., p. 84). "Maîtrisé par l'heure insaisissable"(l. 35), man discovers the crumbling illusion of a coherent personality: "nous allons devant nous comme des exiles"(l. 36); "notre passé se ferme pour toujours, /je sens que je deviens étranger à ma vie"(ll. 48-9). Conscious of his discontinuous personal reality, Guyau the poet concludes that "tout est encor le même /... autour de nous; en nous tout est changé"(ll. 77-8), and that the past is but a "vide profond et sourd qu'en nos coeurs le temps laisse" (Pt. II, l. 24).

The influence of Guyau, or a simple analogy, may be detected also in relation to the question of teleology in Azorín. The French philosopher is in fact mentioned in Antonio Azorín with reference to the problem of human finality and purpose: "El mar - decía Guyau ... - el mar vive, se agita, se atormenta, perdurablemente sin objeto. Nosotros también - piensa Azorín - vivimos, nos movemos, nos angustiamos,



y tampoco tenemos finalidad alguna"(pp. 1091-2). "S'écouler sans savoir quel but, au hasard"(l. 34) is a distressing thought for the French philosopher. Uncertain and ominous, will not the future be fruitless and destructive?

Et lorsque je croirai, lumineuse espérance,  
te toucher de la main, ne te verrai-je point  
tomber et tout à coup te changer en souffrance?  
(Pt.II, ll. 41-3).

Yet Guyau boldly but conditionally sets aside his fears. For hope to survive and flourish, man must forget the trials and torments of time with which he has become acquainted through experience: "L'homme, sur cette terre, /s'il n'oubliait jamais, pourrait-il espérer?"(ll.48-9). By forgetting, Guyau claims, man may yet find some positive value in the future: " ... Oublions et marchons ... /Le bonheur le plus doux est celui qu'on espère"(ll. 48 and 52). There is a welcome element of determined optimism countering the time-inspired feelings of dread which Guyau shares with Azorín. It will be seen in due course that Azorín fails to match this positive act of faith, but this is the only instance in which his attitude diverges significantly from Guyau's. As a general rule there is a remarkably close convergence of opinion between the two writers.

Let us now turn our attention to the protagonist's particular existential practice, as portrayed in the action of La voluntad.

The fluctuations of Azorín's lived experience of time, embodied in the novel's structure, illustrate the pessimistic conception of human individual life as an unstable, disjointed, lethargic and aimless progression within the framework of nature's inexorable transience. His experience of time is of a piece with the condition of his will-power,

the central subject of interest from which the novel derives its title. This approach comprises a study of Azorín's developing temperament and is consonant with Jean Pouillon's general claim that "ce que le roman veut exprimer, c'est le développement temporel d'un personnage saisi dans sa réalité psychologique."<sup>19</sup>

Subject to the pressures of the environment in which he has been raised - "el medio conforma nuestro carácter"(p.935) - and to the intellectual and social limitations of his circumstances in Yecla, Azorín, "mozo ensimismado y taciturno"(p.814), spends his time at the beginning of the novel studying or conversing with Yuste. As he will confess towards the close of La voluntad, this exaggerated propensity to abstract thinking results in the displacement of "el hombre-voluntad" in any individual by "el hombre-reflexión". His surrender to reflection results in the negation of activity and positive, purposive action. This consequently deprives the individual of a dynamic whereby to measure time and movement, since, as Guyau states, "en désirant et en agissant dans la direction de nos désirs, nous creons à la fois l'espace et le temps." It is, perhaps a happy coincidence that the Frenchman's terms, will ("désirs") and action ("activite"), are those used by Azorín to define his character's nature. If, as Guyau suggests, "c'est le mouvement dans l'espace qui crée le temps" (La genèse..., pp.46-7), then a life spent, as is Azorín's, in thought and conversation must inevitably be monotonous and passive. His will is frustrated, his activity (cf. esfuerzos) inchoate and time a negative, sterile category of his existence.

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<sup>19</sup>Pouillon, Temps et roman (Paris: Gallimard, 1946), p. 31.



The yardsticks by which Azorín can measure the activity-quotient of his life are provided by the vicissitudes of emotional, mental and spiritual development. Only in chapter XI does he break the morose, aboulie inertia of his reflexive distraction depicted in the preceeding ten, when he discovers that Justina, the girl he hopes to marry, is to enter a convent at Puche's instigation. "Es indudable que con toda su impassibilidad, con toda su indiferencia, Azorín siente por Justina una pasión que podríamos llamar frenética" (p.848). Upon hearing Yuste's proposal that he should assume an attitude of prudent self-control, Azorin angrily retorts, in vitalistic vein: "¡La rebeldía pasiva! Eso es absurdo: habría que ser como la piedra, y aun la piedra cambia, se agrega, se disgrega, evoluciona, vive, lucha ... ¡La rebeldía pasiva! ¡Eso es un ensueño de faquires! ¡Eso es indigno! ¡Eso es monstruoso! ... ¡Y yo protesto!" (p.852). This isolated instance of Nietzschean self-assertion is, however, a mere show of will. In the subsequent chapters Azorín does nothing to impose himself on the unfavourable circumstances, nothing to convert that indignation into positive action, nothing, therefore, to create a temporal dynamic for his life. The environment of Yecla ultimately overwhelms and crushes him, "como un ambiente angustioso, anhelante que nos oprime, que nos hace pensar ... en la inutilidad de todo esfuerzo" (p.835). Azorín's resulting abulia deprives his experience of lived time of continuity: his life is a series of fits and starts, totally lacking in coherence. Thus, when the time comes for Justina to take her vows, Azorín makes no attempt to prevent her being shut away. The two separate sadly, yet smoothly: "y llega lo irreparable, la ruptura dulce, suave, pero absoluta, definitiva" (p.868). This event is followed by a period of inactive monotony,

spent in discussions with Yuste, Padre Lasalde and el Abuelo at El Pulpillo. The routine inertia of reflexión is then disrupted by Yuste's illness and death in chapters XXV-VI, the second major formative event in Azorín's spiritual development, which immerses him in "un estupor doloroso". "Azorín siente una angustia abrumadora .... Yuste ha muerto; el padre Lasalde se ha marchado al colegio de Getafe; Justina ha entrado en un convento. Y Azorín medita tristemente, a solas, en su cuarto, mientras deja el libro y toma el libro"(pp.900-1). His lack of will-power and spiritual equilibrium is manifest in his experience of time as a purposeless, disjointed property of his existence: "en un estupor doloroso, Azorín permanece horas y horas sentado, vaga al azar por la huerta, solo, anonadado, como un descabellado romántico"(p.902). The first part of La voluntad closes with a scene in which the disoriented, malaise-stricken young protagonist reflects on the nature of reality, in a dimly-lit room at El Pulpillo. "La imagen lo es todo - medita -. La realidad es mi conciencia." By closing his eyes, he can shut out light and colour, but time cannot be removed from the sphere of human experience; it is an inescapable persecution, the sine qua non of existence: "La luz se apaga; en la oscuridad, los purpúreos grumos de la pavesa reflejan sobre la dorada lamparilla ... El afanoso tic-tac de un reloj de bolsillo suena precipitado"(p.911). Part I thus closes on a depressed note of vivid temporal awareness.

The action of part II of the novel is separated in time from that of part I by a period of 10 years. Justina has since died and Azorín has come to Madrid, where "su pesimismo instintivo se ha consolidado; su voluntad ha acabado de disgregarse en este espectáculo de vanidades y miserias"(p.912). His lived experience of time is defined in the



following pessimistic picture: "su espíritu anda ávido y perplejo de una parte a otra; no tiene plan de vida; no es capaz del esfuerzo sostenido; mariposea en torno a las ideas; trata de gustar todas las sensaciones, Así, en perpetuo tejer y destejer, en perdurables y estériles amagos, la vida corre inexorable, sin dejar más que una fugitiva estela de gestos, gritos, indignaciones, paradojas"(p.913). Azorín's present is disoriented, frustrated and disjointed, and action is relegated to shadowy aspirations. Since his future is an unknown quantity and the past is immediately destroyed in the flux of transience, his life is reduced to a deficient process. Time is an irremediable condition which deprives Azorin's world of any equilibrium or ulterior value. Consequently, his progress throughout the second part of La voluntad is sluggish and arbitrary. The only activity he can perform is spasmodic and contingent: "al azar ha recorrido varias calles"(p.920), and "en el silencio de las calles desiertas, vaga al azar"(p.925). What appears to be an outburst of Nietzschean rebelliousness is, in reality, no more than a show of juvenile drunken indignation: "Azorín, en pie, ha gritado: ¡Viva la Imagen! ¡Viva el Error! ¡Viva lo Inmoral! Los camareros, como es natural, se han quedado estupefactos. Y Azorín ha salido soberbio del café." The narrator comments with gentle, but firm and precise irony, that "no es posible saber a punto fijo las copas que Azorín ha sorbido. Verdaderamente, se necesita beber mucho para pensar de este modo"(p.930). In chapter VII, caught once more in the trap of self-analysis, Azorín meditates on his condition: "mi pensamiento nada en el vacío, en un vacío que es el nihilismo, la disgregación de la voluntad, la dispersión silenciosa, sigilosa, de mi personalidad..."(p.940).

Two subsequent excursions, one to the Rastro and the second to Larra's grave, convince him of the futility implied in transience and heighten his sense of determined fatality. Part II of La voluntad culminates in the decision, symptomatic of his "fracaso irreparable", to leave Madrid. "¿Adónde va? Geográficamente, Azorín sabe adonde encamina sus pasos; pero en cuanto a la orientación intelectual y ética, su desconcierto es mayor cada día"(p.959). Caught in a state of limbo, his will-power and strength of reason undermined and ineffectual, the disconsolate Azorín wavers between inertia and agitation, in a process of consistent deterioration.

The third part of the novel begins with the author's confident assertion that movement of any kind is better than no movement at all: "puede ser que el camino que recorre Azorín sea malo; pero al fin y al cabo, es un camino. Y vale más andar, aunque en malos pasos, que estar eternamente fijos"(p.961). One suspects, however, that this would be of little comfort to the person involved in that aimless trajectory. Returning to the provinces, Azorín's experience of time is characterised by the two constants already outlined: the disruption between past and present, and the discontinuity between present and future. The psychological equivalents are the senses of incoherence and aimlessness, and the metaphysical issues those of personal continuity and purpose. After a brief and specious recovery of spiritual calm through ataraxia (p.964), Azorín realises that his innate lack of temperamental equilibrium is an inescapable trait of his personality: "todos los esfuerzos por llegar a un estado de espíritu tranquilo resultan estériles ante estos impen-sados raptos de fiereza. Yo soy un rebelde de mí mismo"(p.967-8). The young man lacks above all that quality of autotelia which the author



defines as "cualidad de un ser que puede trazarse a sí mismo el fin de sus acciones" (Antonio Azorín, p.1105). When Azorín eventually marries Iluminada, J. Martínez Ruiz<sup>20</sup> visits him in Yecla, and writes to don Pío Baroja of the circumstances in which he finds their mutual friend. These letters form an epilogue to the three parts of the novel. Referring to Azorín as "un lamentable caso de abulia", Martínez Ruiz describes him as "un hombre sin acabar" subject to the same defect as his preceptor Yuste, "a quien le faltaba la continuidad en el esfuerzo, y por eso no pudo nunca hacer ningún trabajo largo, ninguna obra duradera" (pp.991-2). That Azorín should be destitute of a 'forward-reaching' ideal is in large part due to his self-professed creed of determinism. "Soy un determinista convencido," he confesses in chapter V of part II (p.932); "las cosas nos llevan de un lado para otro fatalmente; somos de la manera que el medio conforma nuestro carácter," he thinks a while later (p.935). Throughout the novel Azorín is depicted as being imprisoned and overpowered by the environment, be it natural or social. But the very fact that he admits submission to externals is indicative of his weakness of will, if as George Pouillon contends, "le destin ... n'est que la manifestation de la psychologie d'un personnage donné." Azorín passively accepts that his life-process ("camino") is the result of the environment in which he has lived: "el mío es el de ese pueblo donde he nacido, donde me he educado; donde he conocido a un hombre grande en sus debilidades; donde he querido a una mujer, buena en su fanatismo; donde acabaré de vivir de cualquier modo, como un vecino de tantos..." (p.969). Following Pouillon's premise that "c'est dans la psychologie d'un individu

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<sup>20</sup>Inman Fox, *op.cit.*, p.38-9, discusses the artistic relevance of Azorín's decision to introduce historically verifiable, and therefore extra-literary, data into the novel's structure.

qu'il faut chercher le sens des enchainements d'événements qu'il semble subir,"<sup>21</sup> the reader concludes that Azorín's fatalism and ultimate submissiveness is the product of a deficient psychology.

The circumstances in which the protagonist is left at the end of La voluntad illustrate Azorín's marginal departure from Guyau's conclusions about life and time. The French poet had made a gesture of determined hope: "oublions et marchons" ("Le temps", II, 1. 48). There seems no likelihood that Azorín, or Antonio Azorín in the novel of the same name, would be able to adopt such a hopeful, affirmative attitude towards the future, for they ultimately lack the spiritual capacity to make a positive act of faith like Guyau's. Were the two protagonists even able to "forget" on Guyau's terms, this would only be a preliminary step towards solving a far more complex metaphysical problem inherent in their basic abulia and lack of autotelia. Azorín, in La voluntad, is determined by a static environment, whilst Antonio Azorín, though more active than his predecessor, is unable to direct his activity toward a future goal, being bound in and by a perpetually monotonous present. Resignation, submission and lack of prospective purpose together augur for a depressing, utterly negative future for the two men, whose fate symbolises, at the level of particularity, that of the world, the "evolución de los mundos hacia la Nada" (p.917). Deprived of a coherent experience of time and reduced, at the end of the novel, to a truncated form of consciousness, Azorín vegetates instead of living. Martínez Ruiz thus laments the fact that "Azorín vive como una cosa" (p.985) in temporal paralysis and suspended in a hopeless void which is the dreary culmination of his wasted life.

<sup>21</sup>Pouillon, Temps et roman, pp. 211 and 158.



Azorín's critical awareness of the technical problem of form makes him an especially apposite case for attention in our thesis. In chapter XIV of La voluntad, Yuste discusses contemporary novelistic technique with the young Azorín in a conversation which indicates a highly conscious attitude to form in the author. Yuste reflects on the formal correlation between life and fiction and contends that "Ante todo, no debe haber fábula ...; la vida no tiene fábula; es diversa, multiforme, ondulante, contradictoria ..., todo menos simétrica, geométrica, rígida, como aparece en las novelas"(p.864). These comments may be compared with Virginia Woolf's equally corrective assertion that "we suspect a momentary doubt, a spasm of rebellion, as the pages fill themselves in the customary way .... Life is not a series of gig-lamps symmetrically arranged," according to its presentation in conventional fictional structures.<sup>22</sup> Implicit in these general considerations of form is an evaluation or, in historical perspective, a revaluation of the temporal nature of structure. If "la vida no tiene fábula", then its direction is indeterminate and its actual structure "ondulante, contradictoria", variable and arbitrary. Yuste praises the Goncourt brothers, "que son los que ... se han acercado más al desideratum, no dan una vida, sino fragmentos, sensaciones separadas", and in this and other preceding comments gives a working definition of Azorín's fictional practice in La voluntad and subsequent works.

The young Azorín's lived experience of time is expressed in the novel's form by four structural procedures. The first property of La voluntad's structure is its causal seriality: we deliberately avoid using the term "linearity" because what appears to be a process of linear

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<sup>22</sup>V. Woolf, "Modern Fiction," in The Common Reader, p. 189.

seriality may ultimately reveal a pattern of parallel repetition, to be referred to in due course.<sup>23</sup> The novel's four parts succeed one another in a chronological sequence of cause and effect in accordance with Azorín's belief in a universal "infinito encadenamiento de causas y concausas"(p.932). Time is regarded as an abstract property inherent in the world process, "la corriente eterna de las cosas"(p.997): "vida es sucesión; sucesión es tiempo" (p.815). The cosmic function, independent of man but manifest in nature, implies temporal development, as is suggested in Guyau's ideology: "selon nous, le temps n'est qu'une des formes de l'évolution; au lieu de la produire, il en sort. Le temps, en effet, est une conséquence du passage de l'homogène à l'hétérogène; c'est une différenciation introduite dans les choses; ... le temps est la formule abstraite des changements de l'univers"(La genèse ...., p.119). For Azorín, time is embodied in natural transience, in the varying cloud-formations for example: "las nubes son la imagen del tiempo."<sup>24</sup> La voluntad opens with a pictorial evocation of natural transience. Day-break in Yecla is described in the first four paragraphs as a gradual process of natural light and colour transformation, which the author-narrator sensitively records in five movements: "El cielo comienza a clarear indeciso ... (A 10-line interval refers to the atmosphere of the sleeping town). Poco a poco la lechosa claror del horizonte se tiñe en verde pálido (5 lines of circumstantial description). El campo - claro ya el horizonte - se aleja ... (2½ line interval). El cielo, de verdes tintas, pasa a encendidas nacaradas tintas (15 line interval).

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<sup>23</sup>See below, pages 126-31.

<sup>24</sup>Castilla', Obras completas, 11, 709.



El cielo se extiende en tersa bóveda de joyante seda azul"(end of fourth paragraph). Change and transformation - "todo pasa" - are absolute characteristics of the natural world, and time the abstract consequence: "vida es sucesión; sucesión es tiempo."<sup>25</sup> Imprisoned within the temporal framework of continuous cosmic transience, man lives his life, subject of necessity to the universal principles of succession and change. As in a traditional biographical novel, Azorín undergoes a series of experiences constituting, in his case, a consistent trajectory of personal deterioration. Due to his passive, lethargic nature, this serial pattern is slow and monotonous, lacking the dynamism embodied in a biographical novel by Dickens, Galdós or Clarín. This, however, is deliberate structural practice, faithful to the demands set out by Yuste in his decree that "la vida no tiene fábula; es diversa, multiforme, ondulante, contradictoria..."(p.864).

Although the novel's structure is basically serial, it is also discontinuous and fragmented. This is the second structural attribute of La voluntad and it reflects the arbitrary fluctuations and vicissitudes of the protagonist's vital experience. The technique of structural and temporal fragmentation has become consistent literary practice in twentieth-century fiction, as illustrated in such novels as Aldous Huxley's Eyeless in Gaza, Dos Passos' Manhattan Transfer, Juan Rulfo's Pedro Páramo and Gómez de la Serna's El incongruente. As an embodiment of theory, this technique contradicts the traditional ideals of a coherent historical reality, the continuity and unity of the human

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<sup>25</sup>Cf. the depiction of natural rhythm and time in Aldecoa's Parte de una historia, studied in part II, chapter III of this thesis.

personality and the underlying principle of cause and effect. Fragmentation may be interpreted as a literary form illustrative of existential fracture and, consequently, of human alienation. The denial of temporal continuity shatters the notion of absolute personality and reduces consequence to sequence, process to series and identity to relation. "Separation, diversity - conditions of our existence", writes Aldous Huxley,<sup>26</sup> in a sentence particularly relevant to a culture which has come to emphasise social division, scientific fragmentation (cf. Planck) and metaphysical disunity. Man is conceived of as divided from his fellow-man, from his own 'self' (a controversial notion), and from any absolute, transcendental power or ideal. Such is Antonio Azorín's condition in La voluntad. Disconnection operates on four levels in the novel: a large time gap is unaccounted for between parts I and II; the sequence of chapters is sometimes discontinuous; within a single chapter a number of sections may be juxtaposed in linear isolation; finally, a single paragraph or grouping of sentences may incorporate a number of fragments. Yuste favoured the Goncourt brothers for depicting "no ... una vida, sino fragmentos, sensaciones separadas"; Azorín accordingly portrays an individual whose life is lacking in cohesion and continuity. An ineffectual, eroded will deprives Azorín, as it does the whole population of Yecla, of the ability to follow any project through to an aimed-for end; any movement or activity begun remains inchoate. His life is consequently "toda esfuerzos sueltos, iniciaciones paralizadas, audacias frustradas, paradojas, gestos, gritos ..." (p.995). The separation between past and present and the discontinuity between

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<sup>26</sup> A. Huxley, Eyeless in Gaza (Penguin, 1968), p. 397.



present and future make his life a disjointed process, portrayed through a technical procedure of disconnection. "La secuencia fragmentada característica del método novelístico de Azorín, producto directo de su sensibilidad básica, descoyunta la realidad para transformarla en una serie de momentos aislados," Livingstone observes.<sup>27</sup>

The ten-year interval which separates parts I and II mirrors the empty and incohesive form of Azorín's vital progress through time: "en perpetuo tejer y destejer ... la vida corre inexorable"(p.913). He has achieved nothing since leaving Yecla and fails to settle in Madrid, where he is to be found stagnating at the beginning of the "Segunda parte". The lack of cohesion in his life is consistently represented also in the overall fragmented pattern of the novel's 50 chapters. The disjointed presentation of chapters in La voluntad may be attributed in part to the disparate nature of the material with which the novel deals. Some refer to Justina, the clergy and to minor figures like Quijano the inventor, whose experience may not be directly related to Azorín's. There is, however, a clear and predominant disruptive pattern in the sequential process of the young protagonist's experience. The breaks between chapters XI and XIV, part I, may be taken as examples to illustrate this. When Yuste calmly advocated patience in the face of Puche's decision to separate Justina from him definitively by sending her to a convent, Azorín suffered an outburst of anger and indignation which suggested he might do something positive to prevent it. When he next appears, in chapter XIII with Quijano and then in XIV with Yuste, the Justina-topic is conspicuously absent from the content of those two chapters: continuity

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<sup>27</sup>Livingstone, Tema y forma..., p. 235.

"en el esfuerzo" is denied Azorín. Similarly, in part II, chapter V follows the preceding one with no element of consequence: event succeeds event in continual isolation. As a result, chapters frequently open abruptly and in medias res. The description of a conversation between Azorín and Yuste in chapter XIV, part I, is followed by that of the young man's sight-seeing tour of Yecla's monuments with Justina. Between the two chapters there is a necessary formal sequence, but it is not consequential: chapter XV, its abrupt, definitive opening suggests, relates a unit of experience separate, i.e., discontinuous, from those previous: "Noche de Jueves Santo. A las diez, Azorín ha ido con Justina a visitar los monumentos"(p.865). Chapters VI and IX of part II embody a similar presentation of the action in medias res, although in the latter, the fragmentary nature of experience is conveyed by a variation in tense-form. The present tense predominates throughout the novel, but it is displaced at the beginning of chapter IX, part II, by an emphatic use of the preterite: "Y este grupo de jóvenes entusiastas decidió celebrar el aniversario de Larra"(p.951). Such isolatory procedures suggest the contingent, incoherent nature of the young protagonist's vital experience.

In La voluntad there are some textual gaps between sections, in addition to those which separate chapters. Pages 812, 839, 863 and 955 illustrate this formal procedure, the purpose of which seems to be the evocation of an awkward sense of disjuncture. The pause - "larga pausa" (p.847) - and moments of terminative silence also separate events and units of human experience, while conveying at the same time the sense of natural transience. The dialectic of man's circumstances in the world is thus illustrated. Azorín's reply to Yuste, separated by a gap in the text, is delayed accordingly by a "larga pausa". "La lluvia continúa



persistente. El agua descende por los tableros de espanto de las ventanas"(p.863). Man's contingency is contrasted with nature's unequivocality. The pause or temporal interval is at times also suggested by the use of suspended points, whose importance resides in their evocative quality of ellipsis. Those on page 974 (see also pages 821, 825 and 955) correspond formally to the concept expressed in the sentence they fail to bring to a close: "Yo creo que la vida es el mal," Azorín muses, "y que todo lo que hagamos para acrecentar la vida es fomentar esta perdurable agonía sobre un átomo perdido en lo infinito ..." Finally, fragmentation is present in the syntactical presentation of simple paragraphs or sentence-groups, corresponding to the discontinuity Azorín experiences between even minimal periods of time. Chapters normally refer to one day in La voluntad, (part I, XV, XX, XXII, part II, IX etc.), whereas one paragraph may incorporate the event or activities of the moment. So the disoriented young man's restless agitation is expressed through the rapid disconnection of the paragraph's syntax: "En días como éste yo siento ansia de esta inercia. Mi pensamiento parece abismado en alguna cueva tenebrosa. Me levanto, doy un par de vueltas por la habitación como un autómatas; me siento luego; cojo un libro; leo cuatro líneas; lo dejo; tomo la pluma; pienso estúpidamente ante las cuartillas; escribo seis u ocho frases; me canso; dejo la pluma; torno a mis reflexiones ..." (pp.975-6).

An analogy has been drawn between Azorín's technique of disconnected presentation and early cinematic method.<sup>28</sup> An approach to the visual, plastic value of much of Azorín's writing must be considered a

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<sup>28</sup> Antonio Bestard, "Azorín ante el cinema," Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos, 226-7 (oct.-nov.1968), pp. 413-22.

valid, if partial and secondary viewpoint. He in fact published two books towards the end of his life on the subject of cinema, El cine y el momento (1953) and El efímero cine (1955); in the latter he made the significant comment "cómo no me había de atraer el cine, que es el tiempo en concreto." An accomplished novelist and film-maker, Robbe-Grillet, has this to say of the inherently temporal nature of the two art forms: "Le film et le roman se présentent de prime abord sous la forme de déroulements temporels .... Film et roman se rencontrent en tout cas aujourd'hui dans la construction d'instants, d'intervalles et de successions ..."<sup>29</sup> The film is the temporal medium par excellence, A.A. Mendilow agrees.<sup>30</sup> The basis of its form is the separate image, varied and multiplied to produce a successive structure in time. The film, through its differentiated multiplicity of images, is a formal counterpart of that great abstraction, temporal transience. Fragmentation and disconnection are especially characteristic of the film-form for, as Robbe-Grillet remarks, while it constructs instants, pauses and succession it is a necessarily divisive practice: "l'instant nie la continuité." This analogy, as implemented here, serves as a means of comparison to enable the reader to visualise the fragmentation in Azorín's fiction in less abstract terms than the simple act of reading may suggest. The movement from chapter to chapter may be conceived of as a shift from scene to scene and from one visual unit to another. Chapter III of part I opens with a description of Yuste's house vivid in pictorial quality, and the first nine chapters include descriptive tableaux which set the scene,

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<sup>29</sup> A. Robbe-Grillet, Pour un nouveau roman, cited pp. 163, 4 and 8.

<sup>30</sup> Mendilow, Time and the Novel, chapter 6.



accounting for circumstantial detail in a manner which recalls cinematic technique. The intervals between chapters or events and their fictional equivalent, units of experience, may resemble those between shots or images, between which no link of continuity is necessarily required. Gaps, pauses and suspended points may be conceived of as breaks in a visual sequence.

The third principal structural attribute of La voluntad is its inconclusiveness. "La estructura arquitectónica de las primeras novelas en las que los elementos de una intriga convencional están presentes pero quedan intencionalmente sin desenvolver ... produce un tipo de trama lineal, horizontal que va rematándose sin nunca tener un término" (Livingstone, Tema y forma ..., p. 210). Azorín will subsequently use the open ending for aesthetic reasons: it is his love of "la belleza de lo inacabado" which leads him to deliberately deprive La isla sin aurora (1944), of a conclusive denouement. In the early novels, however, the open ending is to be seen as conditioned by the author's metaphysical motivation. In 1914, Unamuno was to produce a remarkable example of inconclusive structure in his profoundly philosophical Niebla. A similar intention is illustrated in Azorín's La voluntad, where the open ending correlates to the problems of natural transience, human purpose and finality.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>The open ending as formal counterpart of vital insecurity may be found in leading contemporary Spanish novels like Cela's La colmena, Goytisolo's La reivindicación del Conde don Julián, Aldecoa's Parte de una historia and Martín Santos' Tiempo de silencio (see below, part II, chapters 2 and 3). These authors may be seen as the heirs and refiners of a thematico-structural convention deriving from Azorín.

At the formal level, the plot of La voluntad is denied a definite conclusion. Azorín, in the last chapter of part III, writes in biographical vein of his attraction to Iluminada and of the way in which she manipulates him, as if he were a puppet: "En el fondo, yo siento cierta complacencia de este automatismo, y me dejo llevar a su antojo"(p.981). The chapter ends with the insulting remarks of Ortuño to which Azorín makes no challenge or reply. What hope can there be for him in the future? Yet this is not the end of the novel. The author tacks on a three chapter-long epilogue consisting of three letters from J. Martínez Ruiz who subsequently visited Azorín in Yecla.<sup>32</sup> This man re-opens the case-book of Azorín's life and discovers a submissive individual in the midst of domestic stagnation. Convinced that he is predetermined, and lacking in purposive imagination and will-power, Azorín is imprisoned in a present itself deprived of any positive future: present inertia stretches before him ad infinitum. In Antonio Azorín the protagonist is left in a similar state of limbo. Suffering from a total deficiency of autotelia, Antonio leaves Petrel for Paris at the end of part II, but only manages to reach Madrid where he is depicted at the close of the novel, writing his daily contribution to a newspaper in which he has no faith. The reader recognises the rejection, in the interests of fictional realism, of the conventional happy ending, particularly in a biographical novel which concludes in marriage. Of the luckless Azorín Martínez Ruiz writes: "él no hace nada; no escribe ni una línea; no lee apenas ... La mujer es la que lo dispone todo, y da cuentas, toma cuentas, hace, en fin, lo que le viene en mentes.

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<sup>32</sup>The appendage of an epilogue is also found 12 years later in Unamuno's Niebla.



Azorín deja hacer, y vive, vive como una cosa ..." (p.985). Martínez Ruiz is, surprisingly, not devoid of confidence about Azorín's future. Such hopes, however, cannot but strike the reader as transparently specious. The tone of the visitor's closing remarks is totally incongruous with that which characterised Azorín's own expression, for example in part III. The element of optimism lies in the narrator, not the protagonist. The reader is thus left uncomfortably sure that the future holds nothing good in store for the young Azorín, who remains "un hombre sin acabar" (p.991).

A fourth, although only partly developed, characteristic of La voluntad's structure is an inherent pattern of cyclical recurrence and repetition. The notion of time and history as cycle is expressed at the thematic level by both Yuste and Azorín. In addition to Yuste's much-quoted theory of finite atoms (p.815) and Azorín's questioning reference to Nietzsche (pp.933-5), there are two other instances in La voluntad where this particular idea of temporal process appears. While talking to Lasalde shortly before his own death, Yuste proclaims: "Todo es igual, todo es monótono, todo cambia en la apariencia y se repite en el fondo a través de las edades; la Humanidad es un círculo, es una serie de catástrofes que se suceden idénticas, iguales. Esta civilización europea ... desaparecerá como aquella civilización romana ..." (p.888). Then, Azorín applies the Spengler-like theory of cycles to his contemporary culture and decides, during the visit to Larra's grave, that "el desolador pesimismo del pueblo griego, el pueblo que creara la tragedia, resurge en nuestros días" (p.954). The idea of cyclical recurrence is insinuated, albeit seminally, in La voluntad's serial structure. Livingstone (Tema y forma..., p. 210) defines the plot as

linear and horizontal; we prefer the adjective "serial" since it may account for the possibilities of both linearity and circularity within a developing structure. Although it is not the obviously fundamental conditioning factor, as in Doña Inés, the cycle-principle is illustrated by four instances in the plot, three of which entail the actual repetition of similar circumstances. At the end of chapter XI of part I, when he has heard of Puché's refusal to let him marry Justina, the hitherto reflective and subdued Azorín suddenly becomes enraged, "nervioso, iracundo, ... trémulo de indignación"(p.851), as a result of Yuste's blithely advocating self-control and patience in the face of such adversity. This isolated outbreak of Nietzschean self-affirmation is the only punctuation of the otherwise monotonous period described in part I. In the less extensive, but texturally similar second part - part II is 47 pages long, less than half of the first part's 104 pages, - Azorín again breaks the monotony of his predominant, submissive depression with a similar outburst of self-assertion. The scene occurs in "el café de Revuelta", where the young journalist has been steadily getting more and more intoxicated with the aid of a bottle of aguardiente. Pondering on the mediocrity and stupidity of Castilian provincial life, he comes to the conclusion that "Hay que romper la vieja tabla de valores morales, como decía Nietzsche. Y Azorín, en pie, ha gritado: ¡Viva la Imagen! ¡Viva el Error! ¡Viva lo Inmoral!"(p.930). There is a similar emotional foundation to both protests, as there is a common philosophical basis, that of Nietzschean individual will-power. A second instance of repetition involves Yuste and Azorín. In chapter V of the first part of the novel, Yuste receives a cultural review con-



taining an article written by a previous colleague of his who has failed to mention his name in the credits: "en este estudio ... Yuste ha visto omitido su nombre, maliciosamente, envidiosamente ..." (p.823). This makes the master reflect on the frivolous egoism of social man. Azorín finds himself in identical circumstances some years later, when a fellow journalist, reporting the dinner celebrated on the occasion of the publishing of Olaiz's latest novel, deliberately suppresses any reference to Azorín's presence there because he, Azorín, had forgotten to greet him recently in the street: "Azorín ve con sorpresa que se nombra a todos los que en la comida hablaron, a todos sin faltar uno, menos a él, al propio Azorín" (p.931). His reaction is similar to Yuste's; he draws the conclusion that "hay en todos una susceptibilidad, un orgullo y un egoísmo extraordinarios" (p.932). Azorín does in fact recall a precedent for this event, probably those very circumstances in which Yuste was slighted: "Yo recuerdo que hace años, en un periódico en que dominaba un literato tenido por insigne, se copiaban los sumarios de una revista literaria, y al copiarlos suprimían el nombre de un escritor, colaborador de esta revista, que tiempo atrás había molestado con su sátira al literato insigne" (p.931). It is significant, perhaps, that, after comparing his situation with that of the satyrist of "hace años", Azorín immediately and in the same chapter thinks of cosmic determinism and the Nietzschean proposal of the Vuelta Eterna (p.933-5). He may feasibly be relating this theory to his recent empirical experience.

At the end of part I, when Yuste has died and Justina taken her vows, the lonely Azorín is occasionally visited by Iluminada. This robust, jovial and energetic young woman exercises a fascination over Azorín, who sees in her a compensation for his own lack of will-power.

He considers that "Hay en el mundo personas destinadas a vivir la mitad, la tercera parte, la cuarta parte de la vida; hay otras, en cambio, destinadas a vivir dos, cuatro, ocho vidas," and includes himself among the former category. A realistic appreciation of his personal deficiencies leads him to the conclusion that "vivo media vida, y es probable que sea Iluminada quien vive una y media, es decir, una suya y media que me corresponde a mí ... Así me explico la sugestión que ejerce sobre mí ..." Azorín then proceeds to entertain a thought which must strike the reader as poignantly ironical in retrospect, for he imagines being married to Iluminada, thus unwittingly predicting the adverse circumstances in which he is to find himself when the novel closes. He hopefully proposes that "si yo me casara con ella, la unidad psicológica estaría completa; yo continuaría viviendo media vida, como hasta aquí, y ella me continuaría haciendo este favor inmenso, el más alto que puede darse, de ayudarme a vivir, de vivir por mí"(p.902). More than ten years later, after leaving Madrid where he worked as a journalist (part II), Azorín returns to El Pulpillo where Iluminada lives. In the scene of their reunion he discovers that she has lost none of the power which so attracted him to her: "la veo ante mí fuerte y jovial"(p.979). He eventually marries her, although the circumstances of their union are not as prosperous, nor the "favour" she does him so "immense", as he predicted years before. Hen-pecked and bullied by a scheming and authoritative wife, "Azorín deja hacer y vive como una cosa"(p.985). His return to Yecla and Iluminada illustrates a process of temporal cycle and recurrence. An admirable commentary of the circumstances is afforded by a passage in Diario de un enfermo which might serve as a detailed glossary of Azorín and



Iluminada's relationship. "Hay fuerzas misteriosas, poderosas fuerzas, que atraen irresistiblemente a dos seres - hombre, mujer - que se ven por primera vez en la calle, en un teatro, en un tranvía ... Pasan los días, pasan los meses, pasan los años ... Una tarde, una mañana, una noche, rápidamente, al cruzar una plaza, al pasar en un coche, se renueva el encuentro; y vuelve, andando, el tiempo a renovarse ... ¿Qué fuerza misteriosa las impulsa una hacia otra?" (where "las" refers to the vidas of the man and woman in question) (p.699). Mysterious determinism and temporal 'renovation' are as much characteristics of Azorín's experience with Iluminada as they are of the situation described in the Sick Man's diary, although a sense of tragedy replaces the romanticism of the diary scene.

A fourth example of the repetition of similar circumstances is suggested at the very end of La voluntad. Martínez Ruiz considers the possibility that a second volume of Azorín's biography might be written, under the title of La segunda vida de Antonio Azorín. "Esta segunda vida será como la primera: toda esfuerzos sueltos, iniciaciones paralizadas, audacias frustradas, paradojas, gestos, gritos ..." (p.995). Although time cannot return as an exact reproduction of itself, this being precluded by the absoluteness of transience, it can repeat situations formally similar to previous ones. This will be illustrated on a grand scale in Doña Inés, in which the heroine undergoes experiences bearing a surprising resemblance to those lived centuries before by doña Beatriz, but not without variations on the original form. It is in this sense of repetition, not return, that Martínez Ruiz suggests a cyclical continuation of Azorín's life-pattern. The general metaphysical implications of the theory of cyclical recurrence are ambiguous: it

ensures continuity, but prolongs all cosmic mediocrity ad infinitum. With specific reference to La voluntad, cyclical time, with its promise of continuation, offers the frightening prospect of perpetuating the mediocrity central to Azorín's first "life". For, if nothing good came of the first, what guarantee is there that any advantage will be gained from the second? The idea of world development in a process of cycles is thus as metaphysically disheartening as that of an open-ended universe.

The four dominant structural characteristics of La voluntad express at the formal level Azorín's critical experience of life as an essentially problematical reality. With particular reference to the temporal dimension of existence, to which he is especially sensitive, Azorín's vital disorientation is illustrated by the relentless, disjointed and purposeless structure of his progressive experience. In organic correspondence, the novel's form and content constitute a sound representation of the author's predominantly time-centred, pessimistic Weltanschauung. Although an escape from the dilemma would be realised in later novels through abstraction in Art, La voluntad is an intense exercise in the expression of human insecurity and distraction through the medium of the chronomorph.



## PART II

## The Novel in the Post-Civil War Period.

A central feature of the post-Civil War novel in Spain is the continuing manipulation and consequent refinement of chronomorphic technique. The expression of newly acquired or adopted ideologies entails the selection of an appropriate form itself equally novel or sophisticated. This process of technical consolidation and amplification continues to manifest itself in the novel of the present day.

## CHAPTER I.

## Cyclical and Relative Time in

Camilo José Cela's Pabellón de Reposo.

Albert Einstein's Theory of Relativity is an outstanding example of the radical reappraisal of the subject of time and motion which has taken place in the twentieth century. As such it is a singular illustration of contemporary science's general rejection of traditional beliefs and values.<sup>1</sup> A writer who wished to account for this particular shift in thought has had at his disposal a formal medium most suited to the purpose since it is probably through the framework of the novel, a chronomorphous structure, that the theme of time can be most concretely expressed. The principles of Relativity have indeed been reflected in certain forms of the novel. Shermann Eoff has ambitiously sought a correspondence between the scientific theory and philosophical premises of the Relativists and literary artefact and ideology in Unamuno's work.<sup>2</sup> The present study will attempt to illustrate a similar correspondence with Einsteinian theory in Camilo José Cela's Pabellón de reposo.

Cela's second novel Pabellón de reposo, written in 1943 and published in the following year,<sup>3</sup> has attracted considerable critical notice. Eugenio de Nora and Juan Luis Alborg refer to it cursorily, whilst José María Sánchez Silva, Zamora Vicente and Victorino Polo

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<sup>1</sup>See above, pages 14-15, for fuller comment.

<sup>2</sup>Eoff, The Modern Spanish Novel, pp. 186-212.

<sup>3</sup>Reference will be made to the Destino edition of Pabellón de reposo, published in Barcelona, 1952.



García deal with the novel in greater depth.<sup>4</sup> The most penetrating and illuminating criticism of Pabellón de reposo has been advanced by David Foster and Paul Ilie, both of whom direct systematic attention to the formal technique employed by the author.<sup>5</sup> In fact, this novel can be considered from one point of view as a formal experiment, in accordance with Cela's own prefatory declaration: "Pabellón de reposo es un intento ...de desenmarcación de la circunstancia del tiempo que la constriñe y del espacio que la atenaza. En él la acción es nula y la línea argumental tan débil, tan sutil, que a veces se escapa de las manos" (p. 9).

Paul Ilie has most perceptively observed the relevance of Cela's deliberate "preocupación técnica" (p. 9) to the correlation between the novel's unusual structure and the requirements of internal chronology: "Consideremos...Pabellón de reposo," he writes, "donde la acción es virtualmente inexistente, y donde hay una considerable uniformidad de tono con tan sólo una variación parcialmente discernible en las actitudes de los personajes. Se trata de un grupo de personas sin sitio a donde ir, sin posibilidad de caminar, sin nada que hacer, y confinados en su mayor parte en soledad. Es evidente que no cabe hablar de "acción" o trama. Esto supone la ausencia de una sucesión de acontecimientos, lo que a su vez provoca la proscripción del tiempo cronológico." Since the absence of a consecutive structure implies the negation of linear time, Ilie suggests that "Cela está más interesado en (esta) simultaneidad que

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<sup>4</sup>Nora, La novela española contemporánea, 11, 2 (Madrid: Gredos, 1958). Alborg, Hora actual de la novela española, 1 (Madrid: Taurus, 1958). Sánchez Silva, "C.J. Cela: Pabellón de reposo," Arriba, Madrid, 9 de abril, 1944. Zamora Vicente, Camilo José Cela (Acercamiento a un escritor) (Madrid: Gredos, 1962). Polo García, Un novelista contemporáneo (Murcia: Universidad, 1967).

<sup>5</sup>Foster, Forms of the Novel in the Works of Camilo José Cela, (University of Missouri Press Studies, XLIII, 1967). Ilie, La novelística de Camilo José Cela (Madrid: Gredos, 1963).

en la secuencia"<sup>6</sup> of events. In this he is supported by Foster, for whom it is a possible conclusion that "Cela's novel is a series of momentary realities that the structure of the novel attempts to make appear simultaneous."<sup>7</sup> Foster also proposes that the seven chapters of each part of the novel be read in inverted order and deduces a theory of reversible time: this we reject as ultimately unfounded.

The aim of this study is to offer some additional explanation of the novel's formal arrangement. We suggest that there is a fundamental principle of composition deriving from and reflecting a time-value which is part of the pattern of life depicted in the novel: a cyclical process of time. If this is accepted, the form ceases to appear arbitrarily mechanical and may be regarded as a necessary and organic correspondence with the subject matter. We shall also attempt to relate the expression of time to the broader context of life in the sanatorium by considering it as a symptom of and response to the lack of a metaphysical absolute in the patients' world.

A key to the understanding of Cela's method of composition in Pabellón de reposo and its relation to chronology is to be found in the final section of the "Intermedio", which expounds a theory concerned with the relativity of history, time, space and events. The narrator's cousin Anton expresses the belief that "si corriésemos más que la luz podríamos ver la Historia" (p. 119). The narrator accepts the suggestion as plausible: "Pues sí", and proceeds to elaborate on Anton's proposal. Two conclusions emerge from the ensuing page of theorizing.

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<sup>6</sup> Ilie, La novelística...., pp. 80 and 83.

<sup>7</sup> Foster, Forms of the Novel...., p. 48.



First, movement forward at this hypothetical velocity through history, time and space would eventually lead interested parties to witness circumstances which have already occurred, according to a cyclic principle of temporal recurrence: "apretaríamos el paso para correr más y más, y tiempo llegaría en que, aun mas adelante, nos encontraríamos con días más antiguos." The second conclusion is not explicit but a logical deduction. The narrator imagines that "si pudiéramos gabpar aun mas de prisa que la luz..., saldriamos de hoy e iríamos corriendo hacia adelante, pasando en nuestra carrera los días que aún andan unos detrás de otros, como siempre, cosidos a su destino, por el espacio." As a result of travelling at a greater speed than that with which the events of history occur, "our" perception of those days and events would be modified according to the relativity of the two systems of reference: the faster "our" motion, the more slowly the events would appear to move. In the same way, they would appear to get closer together until, instead of distinguishing any horizontal order of motion and succession in their occurrence, "we" would see them all vertically superimposed, over-lapping or piled statically one on top of another. "Our" impression, that is, would be that the events were the simultaneous parts of a whole motionless process, in addition to their forming part of a cycle.

The relativity of the point of view or system of reference is a principle which applies to the reader of the novel and Cela's experiment demands serious and imaginative participation from him. Paul Ilie has commented on "esta fascinante teoría, adaptación imaginativa de la física einsteiniana," and convincingly asserts that "ayuda considerablemente a comprender lo que [Cela] ha hecho en esta novela."<sup>8</sup> To adopt

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<sup>8</sup> Ilie, La novelística.... p. 82.

the terms of Anton's and the narrator's hypothesis, the reader, like Anton, is in a frame of reference where time for him moves faster than it does in the sanatorium. Since his standpoint is relative, life there appears slow, even static, to him: what may be dynamic in one system may appear static to the observers situated in an outside, more-quickly moving system. With this idea as our starting point, we can regard (i) cyclical time and (ii) the relativity of events as they appear to external witnesses situated in a different frame of reference as fundamentals of the life-style depicted in Pabellón de reposo. They are also factors of great importance to the novel's composition since they refer to and affect the reader's point of view.

Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity was published in 1905 and has subsequently become an integral part of twentieth century physical theory. The Special Theory comprises the author's laws of motion, his basic principles of the relativity of distance, time and mass, and his deductions from these principles. Yet it is a universal law of science, derived from Copernicus and adapted by the Relativists, which must first concern us here: that the structure of the Universe is to be conceived of in terms of rotation and orbit. For Einstein, our universe is finite and spherical; the concentration of matter in it produces a curvature of space and time. "The combined distortions produced by all the incomputable masses of matter in the universe cause the continuum [Einstein's 4-dimensional world] to bend back on itself in a great closed cosmic curve," comments Lincoln Barnett, thus defining the fundamental explanation of the macrocosmos.<sup>9</sup> So, the earth rotates daily about its

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<sup>9</sup>Lincoln Barnett, The Universe and Dr. Einstein. The Meaning of Time, Space and Matter (London: Collins, 1956), p. 100.



axis, at the rate of 1.000 miles an hour, and annually about the sun at the rate of 20 miles a second, two basic cosmic functions.

Cela adopts this theory in the scientific hypothesis offered by Anton, and fuses literary fiction and principles of physics in Pabellón de reposo. Shermann Eoff has proposed that some of Unamuno's experiments with the form of the novel may be related to the theory of Relativity. If we remain constantly mindful of the tenuous nature of the links between the scientific and the artistic disciplines, we may accept more readily the suggestion of a correspondence between that theory and literary form in Cela's novel, with its clear and incontrovertible exposition of those ideas by Anton, than in Unamuno's work, about which Eoff offers a highly imaginative but somewhat controversial thesis.<sup>10</sup> Cela's novel, which contains in its very text the theoretical substantiations of its structure, is, one suspects, a conscious, and therefore more confident and less experimental exercise in literary creation. It is, indeed, this clarity and poise, pace Torrente Ballester,<sup>11</sup> which characterises the technical practice of post-Civil War novelists who have both assimilated the ideologies and acquired the means of formal expression which the thinkers and writers of the pre-War period (1900-36) had sought to promote in a wave of collective innovation. The influence of the theory of Relativity on the novel in Spain must ultimately remain a matter of conjecture, but it may be confidently assumed that after

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<sup>10</sup>Eoff, The Modern Spanish Novel. The analogy which Eoff postulates between Baroja and Bergson seems similarly recherché.

<sup>11</sup>Torrente Ballester, reference cited above, page 46.

the War this relation was perceived with clarity.<sup>12</sup> In Pabellón de reposo Cela explicitly respects the essential premise of the universe as sphere. He correctly refers to the earth's rotations: "el mundo, impasible a la congoja, sigue dando vueltas por el espacio, obediente a las complicadas leyes de la mecánica celeste" (p. 210). This sentence occupies a key-position, at the very end of the novel, to remind the reader, as it were, of the actual world's basic property. On one other occasion an inmate, number 11, muses on how "el cielo refleja en sus honduras el claro misterio de la complicada y alboratada mecánica celeste" (p. 177), an idea central to the novel's content. Fourteen years later, in a New-Year edition of Papeles de Son Armadans, Cela expressly indicates the temporal implication of the cyclical cosmic process: "volvió a girar la rueda del año mudadizo, volvió a crujir...el isócrono taladar del tornillo del tiempo" (PSA, IV, 10 [1957], 3). His at least summary acquaintance with the laws of physics is attested by these references and Anton's proposal.

The notion of cycle in the theory of Relativity differs from that expounded by Azorín, for example, in its inclusion of considerations of both time and space. The view of the world as a time-space continuum - (the hyphen is of paramount importance in this phrase) - aims at an all-embracing explanation of physical reality which is more complete than Toynbee or Azorín's exclusively time-concerned attitude. Cela accounts for temporal and spatial factors in Anton's theory. He employs the basic principle of world-rotation in his depiction of the world in

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<sup>12</sup>In 1959, for example, Tomás Salvador published a well-substantiated, sophisticated science-fiction novel, entitled La Nave, portraying the abstract nature of temporal reality and experience in macrocosmic space. It too suggests a cyclical principle as a fundamental property of physical time and space. Shim, the space-ship's principle man of letters, writes: "diríase que estoy dando vueltas a una rueda sin fin..." (Barcelona: Destino, 1959, p. 82).



Pabellón de reposo, and then expands it with his cousin's hypothesis of spatio-temporal relativity. The Relativists' fundamental assertion, that there is no such thing as a fixed interval of time independent of the system to which it is referred, is reflected in Anton's claim that by moving at speeds superior to the velocity of light, (i.e. to those in an established system), our perception of events in that system from our new frame of reference would consequently vary. The hypothesis that Cela proposes is scientifically impossible, but, he hopes, imaginatively conceivable. What he does is to invite the reader to imagine the relativity of the microcosm of the "Pabellón" to the macrocosm of the outside world, from which it is distinguished, and likewise to appreciate the relativity of his, i.e. the reader's, 'public' system of reference to the sanatorium-inmates' 'private' system.

Tío Pablo, in Azorín's Doña Inés, had already expressed a hypothesis of the relativity of the world's motion and temporal medium in 1925. In one of Pablo's dreams, God, referred to as "el Señor" or "el Eterno", informed him that man's world is but like a speck of sand falling from his hand through space and that the two or three seconds required for the sand to fall are for man a thousand years or more: "esos dos o tres segundos son vuestros millares de siglos..." (Obras...., IV, 806-7). Cela gives renewed expression to the essential idea of time being relative to the frame of reference, but also translates it into the medium of the novel's form in an attempt to create a balanced and internally coherent work. Pabellón de reposo may, in short, be seen as an artefact which is meant to account in its various structural dimensions for the multiple aspects of the theme or idea it purports to express. The novel appears as a most complete embodiment of the principle of cosmic relativity.

An analogy has frequently been drawn, usually in imprecise and uncritical terms, between Cela's Pabellón de reposo and Thomas Mann's The Magic Mountain; Paul Ilie is the only critic, to date, to have supported his assertions with detailed allusion to both texts. Certain basic premises on which the argument of this chapter is based may appear to be further substantiated by some material in Mann's novel, with which Pabellón de reposo bears a remarkable, if not suspect, resemblance.<sup>13</sup> Time is the essential theme of The Magic Mountain and Hans Castorp the hero's favourite subject of philosophical inquiry.<sup>14</sup> The young intellectual draws two conclusions which are decisively relevant to our interpretation of Cela's novel. Time and motion, he decides, may be interpreted in dual terms of circularity and immobility. "Now is not then, here not there," Hans reflects, "for between them lies motion. But the motion by which one measures time is circular, is in a closed circle, and might almost equally well be described as rest, as cessation of movement - for the there repeats itself constantly in the here, the past in the present" (p. 437). As has been indicated, "time", "circle" and "cessation of movement" are three aspects of that complex of reality which characterises the tuberculosis centre in Cela's novel. A further point of analogy is provided by the general comments which the narrator makes in The Magic Mountain. He, or Mann the author at one remove, explains the novel's underlying principle, just as Cela does in the "Intermedio" of Pabellón de reposo. Mann inquires: "If today's

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<sup>13</sup>The question of plagiarism falls outside the scope of this study.

<sup>14</sup>Reference is made to H.T. Lowe Porter's translation of Mann's novel (London: Martin Secker, 1927 ).



now... was not easy to distinguish from yesterday's, the day before's or the day before that's, which were all as like each other as the same number of peas, was it not also capable of being confused with the now which had been in force a month or a year ago, was it not also likely to be mingled and rolled round in the course of that other, to blend with it into the always?" To this discussion of the ideas of temporal synthesis, eternity and timelessness, the narrator adds a hypothesis based on the theory of Relativity:

It would not be hard to imagine the existence of creatures perhaps upon smaller planets than ours, practising a miniature time economy in whose brief span and tripping gait of our second hand would possess the tenacious spatial economy of our hand that marks the hours. And, contrariwise, one can conceive of a world so spacious that its time system too has a majestic stride, and the distinctions between "still", "in a little while", "yesterday", "tomorrow" are, in its economy, possessed of hugely extended significance. That, we say, would be not only conceivable, but, viewed in the spirit of a tolerant relativity...might be considered legitimate, sound, even estimable (pp. 688-9).

An appendage to this idea of spatio-temporal relativity is offered by Hans' probing enquiry into "the whole order of things, for instance the size of the earth, the time it takes to revolve on its own axis and about the sun, the division between day and night, summer and winter - in short, the whole cosmic rhythm" (p. 525), notions which are also fundamental to Cela's novel. These passages from Mann's chef d'oeuvre serve to substantiate the ideas of temporal cycle, stasis and relativity upon which our interpretation of Pabellón de reposo is based.

A preliminary survey of the inmates' existential positions provides a general context in which to consider the sanatorium's time-pattern. The novel is a portrayal of the patients' experience of life in the hospital and of the critical circumstances in which they find themselves. Their existence is characterised primarily by the

prevalence of mind over physical action. Confined (cf. "echados", p. 209) to beds and chaise-longues, their lack of physical mobility is compensated by a surrender to the arabesque-like, spiral forms of mental distraction. They are acutely conscious of their physical condition and are imprisoned in a vicious circle of experience since their individual infirmities serve to heighten their psychological awareness of pain and suffering in general. Within their world of impressions, sensations and meditations, a sense of wistful nostalgia predominates, distracting the mind from the present predicament and affording relief in an escape to the past. Number 52 exclaims: "¡Qué gusto ir acordándonos de todo!", and would like "una memoria tan amplia y tan lisa como una bahía" (p. 26-7). 'B', in chapter VII, writes his letters while resting in bed, "y esta paz me trae a la memoria lejanos y dulces sucesos de mi juventud, cuyo recuerdo perdíase ya en la lejanía de los años" (p. 107). But memory is merely an escape from the ineluctable psychological reality of the present: "uno vuelve, a lo mejor de repente, como sin darse cuenta, a la realidad" (p. 29). This reality is illness, suffering and "la cruel presencia de la muerte" (p. 151). Number 11 writes to his fiancée: "la vida del sanatorio me pesa como una losa en la espalda" (p. 80), using an image suggestive of death which also appears on pages 40 and 118. His attitude is typical of the inmates' response to conditions in "el lento y desesperanzado 'Pabellón'."<sup>15</sup> Their reactions to this claustrophobic imprisonment range from subdued boredom, melancholic resignation and impatience to morbid perplexity, frenzied frustration and hysteria, but the essential

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<sup>15</sup>Cela's own comment in "Nota a esta edición" of the novel, p. 11.



psychological note is of defenceless anxiety and fear in the face of the ultimate reality: death, a transcendental threat, overpowering and all-encompassing, an inexorable and inescapable pressure.

Potential spiritual remedies or consolations such as hope, courage, mutual human understanding and compassion are all shown to be ultimately ineffectual, temporary measures. The lack of any human, relative and immanent value to counter the patients' anguish suggests the need for an absolute in which they might confide, a transcendental moral ideal. Unhappily, they can find no rational acceptance of their fate, they can subordinate themselves to no justifiable world-plan: the inmates' dread is as inexplicable by reason as it is insoluble and they are continuous prey to their consciousness of this irrationality. They are thus indignantly reproachful in denouncing their lot: what is, should not be. Number 37 protests that "a los muertos no se les debiera enterrar: es cruel" (p. 43) and number 11 directs his criticism towards God: "¿Por qué, Dios mío, no nos dices lo que hemos de durar; no nos envías un ángel mensajero que nos dijese 'tienes aún por delante quince años, o quince meses o quince días tan sólo, o no más que quince horas'?" (p. 81).

The traditional absolute of Christian faith at first seems a likely source of comfort. God's existence is acknowledged by all seven inmates. Number 52 recognises that "Dios me castigaría si yo intentara este cambio con el pobre cocinero" (p. 30) whose good health he envies. However, He is not presented as a benevolent power but rather as a detached authority, reluctant to intervene in His children's favour, even heavy-handed. Number 40 frenziedly clings to the precious seconds of life "con una furia que Dios me quiera perdonar" (p. 67); number 103's

wish to believe in divine goodness is insecurely founded on an underlying, intrusive suspicion that God's benevolence is just a fiction: "Quiero pensar que Dios es aún muy bueno, infinitamente bueno. Quiero pensar que Dios...hará llegar algún día a esos ojos abstraídos la sinceridad, la evidente sinceridad de esta sonriente y complicada mirada mía que galopa camino de la tierra...Por lo menos, prefiero pensarlo" (p. 92). In part I, number 11 declares that "Dios existe, amada mía de mi corazón, y está de nuestra parte. Tengamos confianza" (p. 78), but the continued experience of life and death in the sanatorium eventually wears down his optimistic faith, until in part II he can only tell his beloved that "Existe Dios...pero no está de nuestra parte" (p. 178). Two textual references even suggest that it is not God who supervises the world's activity but that all is subject to an impersonal, impassive, mathematical formula. Number 11 refers to "la complicada y alboratada mecánica celeste" (p. 177), an image which also closes the novel on a note of helplessness: "el mundo, impasible a la congoja, sigue dando vueltas por el espacio, obediente a las complicadas leyes de la mecánica celeste" (p. 210). As we have suggested, this theory is borrowed from modern Western physics and translated into the literary medium.

The inmates are thus deprived of any solid, stable link with creation or the wider conscience of the universe. Theirs is the dilemma of modern man alienated from the Other and reduced to his insufficient Self (Astronomy and physics even suggest that there is no Other). "Como caminantes sin rumbo" (p. 27), the patients have no vital purpose or secure sense of direction; their life is reduced to 'being' since they have nothing to 'become'. The only future certainly in the 'Pabellón' is an absurd and finite barrier, death, a realization which reduces life



to a negative condition. Number 37, doubting and confused, wonders "¿Será la Gloria un éxtasis, una contemplación como creemos los cristianos? ¿Será una ampliación de los tremendos placeres de la tierra, como suponen los mahometanos? ¿Será un hacerse Nada y encontrar en la negación la ansiada felicidad, como piensan los indios?" (p. 145).

Number 103 imparts the bare, inhospitable truth that "una se muere lenta, pero inexorablemente, como la humanidad entera. No hace falta estar enferma; basta con haber nacido" (p. 91). Such pessimism illustrates Nicolay Berdyaev's statement that "Being which inclines towards death is anxiety, and anxiety is being which inclines towards death."<sup>16</sup> It is such emphatic fatalism and tragic consciousness which prompts us to consider as quite misguided J.L. Alborg's opinion that "el relato no se desarrolla...dentro de un clima de dramatismo o desesperación sino en un remanso de suavidad y de lirismo."<sup>17</sup> On the contrary, the patients' tubercular condition and anguished obsession with suffering and death are fundamentally pessimistic, as is the novel's tone, in keeping with the author's description of its "pretendidamente mantenida angustia".<sup>18</sup>

The inmates' experience of time is a primary source of their despair. Weighed down by memory and bereft of a positive vision of the future, their existence is reduced to a prevalent condition of tension combined with inertia and temporal stasis which they experience in "las

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<sup>16</sup>Berdyaev, The Beginning and the End (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1952), p. 212.

<sup>17</sup>Alborg, Hora actual de la novela española, p. 83.

<sup>18</sup>C.J. Cela, Abellón de reposo, "Nota a esta edición", p. 12.

horas eternas, lentas, tremendas del pabellón" (p. 33). The critical question of time is foremost in their ideology: "se hallan enfrentados con la terrible realidad de la existencia del tiempo a despecho de la ausencia de cronología."<sup>19</sup> Lacking any objective, and deprived of any hope in the Christian after-life, they cannot experience time as a linear process, nor is time ever presented as such in the novel. We have proposed that this fictional world's basic time pattern is the cycle of eternal repetition.

We may now refer in detail to the cyclical features of life in relation to the sanatorium. Outside, there is the cycle of nature as one month follows another. The novel begins in "los primeros días de julio" (p. 23), "el mes de julio que llega trayéndonos hasta aquí su poquito de calor" (p. 25). This is the natural season when "el ganado se va, escapando de la sequía" (p. 23). The motif of drought and heat appears on two other occasions, as an indication, possibly a symbol, of nature's dynamic progression: in chapters III of each part, number 14's agent informs him first, that "la sequía está arruinando la cosecha" (p. 57) and second, during autumn, that "la sequía ha arruinado la cosecha" (p. 159). The second part of the novel begins in autumn, "mala época el otoño" (p. 128), and closes in "los primeros días de noviembre..., los meses de invierno" (p. 209-10). This is the time when "el ganado vuelve (our stress), escapando de las nieves" (p. 209). The novel finishes with the arrival of winter, that is, at the end of nature's annual cycle. Nature's daily cyclical repetition is described by number 40 who looks out at the city in the distance and remarks on the routine sequence of night and day: "aquellas Luces han muerto poco a poco con muerte vulgar, lenta y cotidiana, todas las noches igualmente exacta,

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<sup>19</sup>Ilie, op. cit., p. 84.



idénticamente repetida" (p. 65). When the narrator subsequently accounts for number 40's last days alive, he refers to the same natural environment: "Pasaron algunos días. El sol siguió saliendo cada mañana, tímido a veces, asustado del invierno, siguió poniéndose cada tarde, vencido por la prisa; la horas pasaron lentas, unas detrás de las otras, por riguroso turno" (ourstress) (p. 167). Nature's cycle of lunar and solar rhythms is a tangible consequence of that cosmic geometrical process which governs the earth's endless movement along its orbit: "el mundo...sigue dando vueltas por el espacio..." (p. 210).

Within the sanatorium there is a second time-pattern related to the patients' mental world, which is a variant on the cycle. Berdyaev divides the functions of time into three categories: cosmic, historical and existential;<sup>20</sup> the inmates' temporal reality is of the third category, situated within a framework of the first. Some significant phrases are used to define the characters' psychic activity. Their conversation "por regla general gira sobre el eterno e inagotable tema de la enfermedad" (p. 118): the patients are fated to spend "toda una vida dando vueltas alrededor de un síntoma" (id.), i.e. that of tuberculosis; 'C.' writes to his fiancée "sigo dando vueltas en mí mente a la idea...de nuestra boda." The predominant mental dimension of their existence functions in spiral form. Number 40 sadly confesses "es difícil andar y andar, como sin rumbo, girando eternamente en redondo, como una peonza maldita, condenada al mareo para la eternidad" (p. 172). Is it mere coincidence that she refers to the sanatorium as "este Centro" (p. 171) when both the author and number 14 make use of the seminal phrase "centro del mundo"? "Que ningún enfermo...se crea

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<sup>20</sup>Berdyaev, The Beginning and the End, p. 206.

el centro del mundo" warns the author, while interrupting chapter VI of part I, and the patient sometimes wonders "si no será egoísmo nuestra postura, si no será que todos nos creemos un poco el centro del mundo" (p. 157). The patients' psychological existence is thus described as a revolving process within nature's macrocosmic cycle, i.e. as one cycle within another.

The circle/centre theme illustrates the idea of relativity. The relevance of Anton's hypothesis may be perceived here in relation to the dichotomy of private and public contexts of life depicted in the novel. In relation to the world outside, the inmates' pattern of experience will appear slow, if not static. To the doctors, nurses and independent observers - including the reader -, the patients' existence may appear immobile when viewed from a frame of reference where time moves more quickly. Although both systems may be rotating, one may appear to the other to be moving slowly.

The inmates' experience of time within the sanatorium is twofold. First, they are subject to a fearful, sometimes frantic awareness of time's inexorable transience: "Y el tiempo, esa cosa que nadie sabe lo que es, pasa fatalmente sobre nosotros. Ahora soy ya más viejo, estoy ya más muerto que hace sólo unos segundos, cuando escribía la 'Y' con la que empieza este párrafo" (p. 133). These thoughts, number 52's, are analogous with number 103's anguished complaint that "en mis azules venas leo el designio de fatalidad del raudo agotarse del calendario" (p. 186). Number 40 sees a symbol of time's objective transience in the faded colour of her clothing: "el 40 de mis pañuelos...es ahora de un rojo desvaído, como rosa; parece como si hubiera pasado por una grave enfermedad" (p. 163). Second, and more commonly, the patients experience time as a dead-weight, static and immobile: "el tiempo se



ha parado definitivamente sobre nosotros" (p. 127) and "el mundo está parado como un muerto" (p. 177). Their own abulia and passivity are highlighted at the very beginning of the novel, set in deliberate contrast with nature's vital dynamism: "el ganado se va, escapando...y se lleva lejos." The verb forms used to describe the patients indicate their indolence: "Siguen echados en sus 'chaise-longues', mirando para el cielo, tapados con sus mantas,...pensando en su enfermedad" (p. 23). A sense of monotony and tedium pervades the sanatorium's atmosphere, creating "un ambiente dulce y pausado" (p. 107); "el aire no se mueve y hasta las moscas parecen estar aletargados" (p. 38). Aware as they may sometimes be of concrete temporal transience, the patients eventually succumb to the environmental apathy and experience time as something abstract, imprecise and lethargic. Number 52 keeps a four-year old newspaper in a coat-pocket, a symbol of persistence and immobility (p. 27). Also, he originally enters the hospital to spend only two months there, "estos cortos dos meses que nos esperan" (p. 30); the more he thinks about them, the less precise his idea of calendar chronology becomes: "dos meses solamente, dos meses, como dos libros, dos sillas, dos naranjas, como nos decían en la clase de Aritmética" (p. 31). By the time autumn arrives, he confesses "aquellos breves dos meses que nos habíamos marcado como meta de nuestra cura se han esfumado ya en el saco triste y rebosante de los malos recuerdos. ¡Qué le vamos a hacer!" (p. 129). Mental hermeticism thus deprives time of its dynamic chronology, as measurable by the calendar.<sup>21</sup> While number 11 notices time's passing,

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<sup>21</sup>Cela reminds the reader that division by the calendar is itself only relative and approximate: preface to Mrs. Caldwell habla con su hijo (Barcelona: Destino, 1953), p. 11.

time itself is deprived of its specific progressive nature: "el calendario que tengo ante mis ojos se ha parado en el último día del verano. Cuento el pasar de los días de la semana y he olvidado, después de hacer tremendos esfuerzos por conseguirlo, el transitar de las fechas, eslabones de cadena que me tira de los pies para sumirme en el despeñadero sin fondo del olvido y de la muerte" (pp. 179-80). The uniformity and monotony of the patients' lives confers a strange quality of eternity on their existence, in "las horas eternas, lentas, tremendas del pabellón" (p. 33) which are symptomatic of the sanatorium's anaesthetized temporal atmosphere. Number 40 laments her lot, "girando eternamente en redondo ..., condenada al mareo para la eternidad" (p. 172), and defines the peculiar blend of transience and permanence which characterises the general sense of time in the tuberculosis-centre.

So the inmates experience life and time as a monotonous cycle and giddy eternity. Their own experience complements the process of the natural world outside: macrocosm and microcosm, natural (cosmic) and human (existential) time, correlate in one general principle of circularity.

We may now consider the special relevance of a principle of cyclical space-time to the inmates' condition in the centre and their relation to natural life outside. S.G.F. Brandon, in his scholarly History, Time and Deity,<sup>22</sup> attests the existence of the ancient religious belief in cyclical time in Paleolithic, Stoic and many spheres of Oriental thought. Mircea Eliade has stated that the Eastern conception of the cycle as a unified process of regeneration transcending history

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<sup>22</sup> Manchester University Press, 1965.



derives from an optimistic perspective of man and the cosmos.<sup>23</sup> It is based on a rejection of the values of this world in favour of the after-life; the world beyond personal death will afford liberation from the baseness of the actual world and ensure the individual personal continuity post-mortem. Number 37 in Cela's novel actually mentions the Islamic and Hindu conceptions of the after-life on page 145. The modern adaptation of the concept of cyclical life and time to Western ideology was a most critical process. For when Nietzsche had completed this delicate transfer,<sup>24</sup> after an initial moment of jubilation he soon realised with horror that he had been caught in a trap of his own making. The concept of cyclical return or recurrence in its original Eastern form conflicts with at least two of Western culture's fundamental tenets especially vigorous in nineteenth century thought: the valuing of this life and fear of that which is to come, and the teleological philosophy of historical progress and linear time derived from the Judaeo-Christian doctrine and represented in modern thought by, for example, Darwin, Lamarck, Marx etc.<sup>25</sup> Nietzsche was in fact promulgating a theory of world purposelessness and of "life as a dreary repetitive process."<sup>26</sup> Thenceforward, in writers like Spengler and Azorín the theory of eternal return would be a symptom of world pessimism.

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<sup>23</sup>Mircea Éliade, Le mythe de l'éternel retour (Paris: Gallimard, 1969).

<sup>24</sup>The notion of recurrence had, of course, been present in Vico's philosophy, but it was given a new role by Nietzsche in keeping with the new cultural sensibility of the age. Unamuno, writing in 1913, ridiculed Nietzsche's discovery: "¡ahí tenéis a Nietzsche, que inventó matemáticamente (!!!) aquel remedio de la inmortalidad del alma que se llama la vuelta eterna y que es la más formidable tragicomedia o comitragedia" (Del sentimiento trágico de la vida, Obras..., XVI, chapter 5, pp. 227-8).

<sup>25</sup>See above, the introduction.

<sup>26</sup>Brandon, History, Time and Deity, p. 5.

And so it is in Cela's Pabellón de reposo, where existential despair and the awareness of stasis and monotonous lack of purpose are symptomatic of the superimposition of the foreign theory of cyclical time on a vestigial Christian ethic. The impersonal cosmic space-time pattern is thus consistent with the metaphysical dimension of existence portrayed in the novel.



The theory of cyclical time is illustrated as much by Pabellón de reposo's structure as it is by textual definitions. The novel opens and closes with a description of nature immediately outside the hospital. In the opening chapter of part one "el ganado se va, escapando de la sequía que ya empieza a agostar los campos...Son los primeros días de julio"(p. 23), and in the final chapter of the second part "el ganado vuelve, escapando de las nieves que ya empiezan a cubrir los campos... Son los primeros días de noviembre" (p. 209). Structurally, therefore, the novel se muerde la cola. This provides a basic framework, a primary circle within which the secondary circles of mental and physical activity will rest. There is more than just aesthetic balance in this pattern (cf. Clarín's La Regenta); the form reflects the macrocosmic functions depicted in the novel and corresponds, also, to the human situation: as nature's cycle comes to a close so does the life-cycle of the seven patients.

The novel is also divided into two symmetrical parts, with seven chapters placed in identical order and pattern in both. The characters appear in the same order: in chapter I, number 52, II, number 37, III, number 14, IV, number 40, V, number 11, VI, number 103 and in chapter VII B., or number 2; the material relevant to them is presented in the same form: memoir, diary, memoir, memoir, letter, memoir and letter. Several phrases, even whole sentences, are repeated in the same structural context. A comparison of both chapters II may show how detailed the procedure of repetition is (See separate sheet).

It is David Foster's view that "the two parts represent two segments of time and two states of mind rather than the progression of time and the development of a state of mind."<sup>27</sup> Paul Ilie relates

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<sup>27</sup>Foster, Forms of the Novel..., p. 38.

Both chapters II: an exercise in symmetry.

Part one.

Sábado 12 to miércoles 23.

Sábado 5 to miércoles 16.

Part two.

Basic form: diary, covering 12 days.

Character: number 37, female.

Speaking of: number 52, male.

Thought motifs: (Sábado).

I. Quisiera leer algo de los clásicos.

No me intereso ya por sus amables clásicos.

II. Teníamos las manos enlazadas.

Ya no me coge de las manos.

III. La fotografía...queda...cara a la pared.

Ya no volvemos la fotografía de cara a la pared.

IV. Sus manos (eran) largas y elegantes, y al accionar parecían gráciles avutardas a punto de posarse sobre el suelo.

Sus manos largas y elegantes ...., que al accionar parecían como gráciles avutardas a punto de posarse sobre el suelo, (estaran)...

V. Y se abalanzó sobre mí y me besó.

Ya no se abalanza sobre mí ni ya me besa.

VI. Yo ciertamente hice poca resistencia.

No tengo fuerzas ni ganas de hacer la más mínima resistencia.

(Jueves).

VII. Ayer por la tarde me llamó mi amigo 52 por teléfono.

¡Qué alegría me dió el 52 llamándome por teléfono!

Etc.

Etc.



the formal symmetry to Cela's treatment of a temporal depth dimension: it is as if the two segments were floating in timeless juxtaposition in a vacuum; he also attributes this method to a deliberate technique of "primitivismo artístico".<sup>28</sup> Eugenio de Nora detects development in the second phase, that of "insoslayable enfrentamiento con la muerte", as distinct from the first segment, "un momento todavía esperanzado" in the inmates' lives.<sup>29</sup> We prefer to interpret the systematic pattern of structural parallels as representing the permanence and repetition of essential qualities, allowing nevertheless, for slight modifications in attitudes or conditions: the procedure may thus account for both transience (or its semblance) and uniform stasis, the two properties of cyclical recurrence. With reference to fictional content, basic feelings expressed in part I reappear in part II, but in a more intensified form. Weariness and frustration mount, as in number 11's case. "Hoy veo las cosas, si no con más optimismo, sí con más aplomo y serenidad. Hoy me encuentro mejor" (p. 181), he writes in the first part. The parallel text indicates some alteration in his temperament: "Hoy veo las cosas con mayor pesimismo, con menos aplomo y serenidad. Me encuentro cada vez peor" (p. 181). His essential dilemma is the same in both time segments as are the (semantic) terms in which he conceives of and responds to it; the difference or modification in his attitude is one of emphasis, not essence. The same consideration applies to number 103's obsession that "una se muere lenta, pero inexorablemente, como la humanidad entera" (p. 91). In part II she appears to continue from

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<sup>28</sup>Ilie, La novelística ..., pp. 81-3 and 92-3.

<sup>29</sup>Nora, La novela española contemporánea, p. 117.

where she left off, albeit in different vocabulary: "Insisto. La muerte llama, uno a uno, a todos los hombres y a las mujeres todas, sin olvidarse de uno sólo..." (p. 185). Her idée fixe is constant, although its degree of intensity has varied, according to a principle of recurrence combined with gradual deterioration. The image of the circle is thus applicable to the patients' mental activity, a repetitive and obsessive function like that of the world in which they are situated.<sup>30</sup>

The fundamental lethargy and absence of progress implied in temporal circularity also acquires formal expression in the novel's studied tempo lento, an essential contribution to its general aesthetic. The tempo, which is a structural feature ultimately inseparable from the novel's cyclical attributes of form, is, for the most part, a reflection of the patients' psychological experience of temporal stasis. It is further enhanced, in the act of reading, by our relative frame of reference.

The novel's tempo is a formal counterpart of the very nature and rhythm of life in the sanatorium. Pabellón de reposo is "una novela donde no pasa nada",<sup>31</sup> and one in which "la acción es nula."<sup>32</sup> Since, as Marvin Mudrick claims, "the unit of fiction is the event,"<sup>33</sup> a total absence of "action" implies an essential quality of monotony which may be reflected in a uniformity of tempo and rhythm. The inmates' only

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<sup>30</sup>The patients' very thought processes function in spiral form, as has been indicated on page 148 of this study.

<sup>31</sup>Cela, Mrs. Caldwell habla con su hijo, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>32</sup>Cela, Pabellón de reposo, p. 9.

<sup>33</sup>M. Mudrick, "Character and Event in Fiction," Yale Review, 4 (1961), 202-18.



activity is psychic and temperamental: number 73, a sailor, used to dream of the sea from his couch, "desde el inmóvil bote, perennemente anclado, de su 'chaise-longue'" (p. 93). Nostalgia, private obsessions and flights of imagination are the stuff of the patients' existence; their conversation revolves around the topics of illness and suffering, romance, painting, time and poetry which the narrator defines as "temas inacabables" (p. 118). Number 14 meditates on the insidious theme of death (pp. 151-3) in a slow monotonous, protracted passage in chapter III of part II. The chapter's first seventeen lines deal exclusively with death, either as an idea or as represented by images like "tumba" or "caja".<sup>34</sup> These considerations then lead him through a labyrinth of reflection to the associated themes of old-age, youth and memory. Such concerns are, however, strictly subordinate to his central and overriding preoccupation with death and serve only to reinforce his awareness of mortality. The passage closes with an inevitable return to the central thematic note on which it began: "la muerte no es espanto; es alivio tan sólo. Y el no poder vivir es desalivio y lucha que se pierde." Whereas a causal sequence of ideas contributes to the text's horizontal, or plot-, dimension, the poetic association of a number of motifs, as in number 14's musing, creates a spiral effect within the novel's dimension of psychological depth. Number 11 gives rein to his lyrical thoughts: "Dios mío...pienso por qué no me hicisteis liviana nubecilla de estío, que vive unos minutos tan sólo, o ingrávida libélula voladora que hace tremolar al viento su aérea vestidura de gasa y de velocidad, o reptil que duerme al sol sobre

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<sup>34</sup>Other symbols of death are the "losa", the "ataúd" and, especially, the coffin-barrow, pp. 62-3.

el ruinoso muro..., o hierba venenosa, ortiga o cardo que hiere al ser acariciado o ...Dios mío, ¿por qué ancestral pecado que hoy me toca purgar me hicisteis hombre?" (p. 177). The semantic repetition creates an arabesque or spiral effect which coincides exactly with the endless cycles of the patients' psyches; at the same time, the syntactical accumulation or sequence - motion - is balanced and complemented by the absence of semantic change and progress, thereby creating an impression of immobility.

Pabellón de reposo's deliberate tempo lento derives also from the fact that Cela employs certain purely rhetorical or syntactical devices; these have been comprehensively studied by Olga Prjevalinsky and Victorino Polo García.<sup>35</sup> First, the deliberate use of symmetry is an obstacle to the reader's appreciating the novel's 'action' as something linear or horizontally dynamic: Cela substitutes a fixed and closed pattern for conventional structure. The control of the length of sentences and paragraphs is another method of slowing down the novel's progress. Series of short, crisp phrases, like those which abound in La colmena, are notably and understandably lacking in this earlier novel, their place being taken by extended paragraphs and sentences comprising uniform clauses. Sometimes a paragraph comprises one sole, lengthy, rambling sentence; numbers 11, 40 and 103 frequently express themselves in this manner (pp. 74, 66 and 89 respectively). The consistent use of reiteration is a third central characteristic of the novel's syntactical form and a decisive influence on its rhythm. An adjective is commonly repeated with an accompanying adverb, producing a break, a temporary

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<sup>35</sup> Olga Prjevalinsky, El sistema estético de C.J. Cela (Valencia: Castalia, 1960). Polo García, Un novelista contemporáneo.



suspense, in the narrative progress: "lo único que me preocupa, que me preocupa intensamente, abrumadoramente, es ir viendo mis pañuelos, mis combinaciones, mis blusas..." (p. 61) declares number 40, insisting on her obsession. The accumulation, in a certain passage or chapter, of identical syntactical elements has a similar effect on the reader's apprehension of that passage. The structural insistence on a reiterated, central leitmotif, for example, the idea of Heaven on pages 131-2, may slow down the action so that the reader's impression is that he is witness to an anaesthetized, abstract world:

La señorita del 37 ha muerto. Es espantoso.

...Ahora, desde el alto cielo, ya no llorará cuando a lo lejos divise las luces de la ciudad encenderse cada noche.

Ahora, desde el hermoso cielo, cuando vaya a acostarse ya no apretará contra su pecho, hasta caer invadida por el llanto, aquella fotografía de su novio, que tanto y tan amablemente le atosigaba y le hacía sufrir.

Ahora, desde el lejano cielo, ya no contará a nadie casi misteriosamente sus tristes cuitas, ni ya a nadie preguntará con su mejor sonrisa sobre el origen remoto de aquellos frecuentes e inquietantes esputos rojos que tanto le preocupaban; ya a nadie interrogará con sus ingenuas razones de colegiala enferma, tímida y encantadoras como violetas recién nacidas...

Ahora, desde el clemente cielo, ya no tendrá que mostrarse pensativa ni hacer esfuerzos inauditos para llegar a convencerse, ella también que aquella sangre salió, efectivamente, de la garganta.

¿Será feliz nuestra señorita del 37 en el cielo?...

There are three points worthy of note in this example. First, the passage se muerde la cola and is thus a reflection in miniature of the whole novel's structure. Second, the differentiation in length between the central four paragraphs provides a rhythmical progression of spiralling intensification, reaching its peak at the end of the third, penultimate paragraph. Third, and as a compliment to these two

considerations, an impression of stasis is conveyed by the semantic and syntactical repetition. Four consecutive paragraphs are constructed on the following syntactical pattern, except for the inversion, in the second paragraph, of the third and fourth primary elements:

Paragraphs:		1.	2.	3.	4.
I.	Temporal adverb	Ahora	id.	id.	id.
II.	Adverbial phrase	preposition,	desde	id.	id.
		definite article,	el	id.	id.
		adjective,	alto	hermoso	lejano
		noun,	cielo	id.	id.
III.	Main clause	temporal adverb,	ya	id.	id.
		negative particle,	no	id.	id.
		verb, in future tense,	llorará	apretará	contará preguntará interrogará
		predicate, varying,	...	...	...
		adverb,	cuando	id.	—
IV.	Subordinate clause (Optional)	verb in present subjunctive,	divise	vaya	—
		predicate, varying.	...	...	—

The resultant impression is of insubstantial, inevitable and purposeless neutrality.

Cela deliberately manipulates verb-forms to create certain aesthetic effects. An impression of immobility is conveyed by the



predominant use of present and past tenses. Since physical motion is denied the bed-ridden patients, their only source of present activity is in their minds: such 'activity' must bear an a priori stamp of inauthenticity as a result of its limited capacity of eventful dynamism. Much of the reflection or conversation embraces general topics, "el eterno e inagotable tema de la enfermedad" and "los temas inacabables: del amor, de la pintura, del tiempo, de la poesía..." (p. 118). Number 11 generalises: "los hombres sanos, los hombres que andan por la ciudad, que van y vienen a sus negocios...nada saben de lo que es amar" (p. 73), as does number 40, who makes the sweeping statement that "los hombres y las mujeres no nos entendemos...A un hombre y a una mujer los une un beso, una mirada tan sólo" (p. 64). A lack of personality, illustrated by the fact that Cela refers to the inmates by numbers, as if they were spectral non-characters, distinguishes their thoughts. Thought, in fact, assumes ritualistic proportions for the patients; they seem to be expressing themselves sub specie aeternitatis. They refer in the present tense also to that which is foremost in their minds: their state of health, as a momentary condition and a gradual process of deterioration. So, they speak of actual circumstances: "estoy decaída, no tengo fuerzas para nada" (number 37, p. 39); "mi salud marcha mal, amigo mío" ('B!', p. 200). It is the generalising tendency, however, which prevails, so that the present tense is stripped of its actualising potential and reduced to accounting for detail or fact of a solely virtual nature: ritualistic thought lies in the realms of pre-activity.

The future verb-form is notably lacking in the language of Pabellón de reposo. This is symptomatic of the 'characters'' reluctance to face the future, their furious or desperate clinging to the present and

their otherwise claustrophobic imprisonment in the same. Any instances of the use of this tense are indicative of human misfortune. Only number 37 thinks at any length about the future, but her concern with what awaits her after death is a fascination bordering on the pathological: "Una duda me asalta... ¿Será la Gloria un éxtasis, una contemplación como creemos los cristianos? ¿Será una ampliación de los tremendos placeres de la tierra, como suponen los mahometanos? ¿Será un hacerse Nada y encontrar en la negación la ansiada felicidad, como piensan los indos?" (p. 145). Number 52 does show a vein of optimism at the beginning of his stay in the centre: "después de dos meses...nos volveremos a los paisajes conocidos" (p. 25). Yet the parallel passage in part II suggests no such hopeful prospect: in fact, it introduces some brutally definitive preterite tense forms which indicate the lamentable and irreparable transience of human life and fortune. Number 52's declaration that "pasó ya el tiempo hermoso del ruiseñor; los días tibios y casi alegres de sus conciertos desde lo alto del tilo; las horas amables y beatíficas de las noches del verano" (p. 128) is tantamount to a Machadian lament of tragic mutability. The same patient sadly realises that "sólo con la imaginación podré ya despedirme de aquellos sitios a los que tan ardientemente amé" (p. 129).

The imperfect tense is used to define the activities of nostalgic memory which serve to foster the patients' almost obsessive concern with the past. Number 14, in a prolonged sequence of escapist retrospection (pp. 50-3) jubilantly exclaims about his youth: "¡Ah! Yo me sentía patriota, yo ansiaba para mi dulce país las duras glorias guerreras que jamás tuvo, aunque yo me obstinara en atribuírselas; yo me sentía poeta...yo componía largos y toscos poemas...; yo era un



apasionado amante de la Antigüedad...; yo era...un muchachito pálido..." et seq. The monumental importance of memory to the inmates is attested in the wide use of the imperfect tense throughout the narrative.

The conditional tense, as used in Pabellón de reposo, is perhaps that most imbued with pathos, for it conveys those dreams and hopes which are utterly unrealisable in the future, being doomed to a perpetual state of pre-existence in the past of the human psyche. Number 11 waxes lyrical and imagines himself and his fiancée in a romantic idyll: "Tú serías una joven rana verde, bella y brillante como las hojas del 'holly'...Yo te galeantaría con esa voz de bajo profundo que tienen las ranas mayores...tú ...me contestarías toda ruborizada..." He wistfully confesses "¡Qué lejano está todo!" as his thoughts return to harsh reality (p. 75).

The monotonous, "eternal" tempo is further enhanced by an impression of the imperceptibility of time's passing which is conveyed by the insertion of parenthetical suspension points between two separate narrative elements. Without these points on page 126, the monologue of one day would be indistinguishable from that of the previous. Number 52 writes:

Me voy a volver loco de tristeza al verme claudicar...

Sobre la mesa tengo el Kempis.

Tú eres la verdadera paz del corazón. Tú el único descanso. Fuera de Ti todo es desasosiego e inquietud. En esta paz eterna ...dormiré ...y descansaré...

Amén.

... ..

El médico me dice que lo de ayer fue un ligero vahído sin importancia.

"Lo de ayer" refers to that which was related in the preceding section;

the points replace a hypothetical calendar phrase like 'and the next day' and impose a quality of abstract uniformity or elasticity on the 'action'.

Lastly, Cela accentuates the novel's property of slow-motion by placing at the end of each chapter of part II a single fragment of a unified, consistently developed passage already inserted in full in part I (pp. 62-3). This is the death-cart scene and it constitutes an insistent memento mori throughout the novel. The method of presentation is comparable with the cinematic technique of montage. The fragments appear in accumulative counterpoint with the narrative and in a consequential order which illustrates the theme of irreversible human progression towards death. The material of the chapter which separates any two consecutive units of the cart-sequence gives the impression of having been subjected to a process of ralentissement or elongation in time and space. Each chapter then assumes the appearance of an extended, tragic pause and delaying mechanism between the two consecutive moments of a fatal sequence.

In Pabellón de reposo Cela has created an autonomous world consonant with its denomination. In the "Nota a esta edición" (p. 11) he had written that "el reposo es un mundo deleitoso y lento en el que la ansiada meta se confunde con el diluirse." The book's content, tone, structure and rhythm proceed to fulfil the terms of this definition. We have considered the properties of life in the sanatorium with particular reference to the inmates' experience and conception of time; we have also directed our attention to the spatio-temporal relation between the hospital-centre and the macrocosm. The conclusions which impose themselves are that time is presented as a cyclical process, and



that, in accordance with Anton's (Cela's) hypothesis of relative motion, time in the sanatorium pursues a slow, monotonous course and may appear static to outsiders and to the reader in his secure, 'public' system of reference. The lack of direction, purpose and progress implied in this disheartening temporal scheme is consistent with the patients' Weltschauung; their experience that "la ansiada meta se confunde con el diluirse" is accordant with the nature of temporal stasis and circularity, where the end and the means are undifferentiated. We have also shown how the novel's form reflects the principles of time's stasis and cycle of recurrence by referring to its overall structural pattern of repetitive symmetry and to certain syntactical procedures consistently put into practice by the author. Inspired by the notion of relativity, Cela has produced a complex and sophisticated chronomorph, a novel in which form and content are hermetically fused. In this structure he has found the appropriate medium for depicting a futile world whose central metaphysical principle is the eternal return and uniformity of existential circumstance.

## CHAPTER II

Tiempo de silencio by Luis Martín

Santos: Existential Time and the

Patterns of Experience and Consciousness

Martín Santos' novel Tiempo de silencio<sup>1</sup> has been acclaimed by critics both inside and outside Spain as one of the foremost fictional works to appear in that country during the post-Civil War period. The author's powers of innovatory linguistic expression and his spirit of social commitment have attracted attention,<sup>2</sup> but the novel's philosophical content appears to be a greatly emphasised point of interest. Mary Seale, Shermann Eoff and José Schraibmann, in particular, perceive in Tiempo de silencio a portrayal of the absurdity of the human condition in line with contemporary Existentialist thought.<sup>3</sup> Salvador Clotas ventures a comparison between Martín Santos and Kafka, and in the prologue to Apólogos y otras prosas inéditas draws attention to the novel's "atroz pesimismo, pesimismo no sólo respecto a España y a su

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\* Since completing this study, I have received a copy of Gemma Roberts' Temas existenciales en la novela española de postguerra (Madrid: Gredos, 1973). Her interpretation of Tiempo de silencio confirms the approach adopted in this analysis, but does not include an account of the specific theme of time and its structural embodiment at the novel's formal level.

<sup>1</sup> All references will be to the 8th edition, published in Barcelona by Editorial Seix Barral in 1971. The novel first appeared in 1962.

<sup>2</sup> See Ramon Buckley, Problemas formales en la novela española contemporánea, p. 197 and Jacqueline Chantraine de Van Praag's praise of Martín Santos' "lenguaje insólito y refinado" in "Un malogrado novelista contemporáneo," Cuadernos Americanos, XXIV, 5 (1965), 269-75. Juan Ignacio Ferreras emphasises the novel's social content in his Tendencias de la novela española actual 1931-1969 (Paris: Ediciones Hispanoamericanas, 1970), pp. 187-90.

<sup>3</sup> M. Seale, "Hangman and Victim: an Analysis of Martín Santos' Tiempo de silencio," Hispanófila, 44 (enero 1972), pp. 45-52. Eoff & Schraibmann, "Dos novelas del absurdo: L'Etranger y Tiempo de silencio," Papeles de Son Armadans, 168 (1971), pp. 213-41.



realidad social sino también a toda dimensión humana y existencial."<sup>4</sup>

Mary Seale asserts that "the national theme is subordinate to the existential and generic ones which situate the individual within a hunt in which, as his own hangman, he is of necessity his own victim." For her, the work figures prominently amongst those philosophically inspired contemporary novels which are symptomatic of the general atmosphere of metaphysical disorientation and the collapse of ideological and spiritual certainties: "Tiempo de silencio is a contribution to the exploration of the individual man's dilemma ...in a world whose nature seems to preclude the fixed law and the absolute."<sup>5</sup> Sherman Eoff and his co-author José Schraibmann finds grounds for comparing the Spaniard's novel with Camus' L'Étranger, choosing alienation as their central theme. We shall return to his notion later.

Any general review of the novel's content must strongly echo these already established views. Our specific aim here is to relate the idea of the human condition as it is expressed by Martin Santos in the novel with certain Existentialist considerations, paying special attention to the subject of time and including reference to Kierkegaardian and Heideggerian thought in this connection. Secondly, an attempt will be made to account for the novel's structural attributes through the postulate of a correspondence between these and the temporal factor of the protagonist's experience.

Within the general context of the twentieth century's time-obsession Martin Heidegger's Sein und Zeit must surely stand as one of

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<sup>4</sup>The Apólogos..., a posthumous publication, edition cited, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup>Mary Seale, op. cit. p. 52.

the most thoroughly systematic and critical approaches to the philosophical problem of man's experience of time as a fundamental property of his position in the world. Heidegger argues that the very meaning of human existence is to be found in the fact of man's temporality.<sup>6</sup> Luis Martín Santos, in his revealing series of essays published under the title Apólogos y otras prosas inéditas, devotes a substantial article to the analysis of Heidegger's Sein und Zeit.<sup>7</sup> From the novelist's explanations of this work emerges a soundly perceptive and sympathetic interpretation. Recognising that "la obra de Heidegger pretende ser declaradamente metafísica" (p. 117), he proceeds to emphasise the topics of Dasein, temporality, anguish and the temporality of "care". He adopts as fundamental two of Heidegger's existential propositions: that "todo ser-ahí tiene su propia mundanidad; he aquí un hecho apriorístico, estructural" and that "Todo ser-ahí tiene un encontrarse; he aquí el a priori" (p. 135). These propositions, that is, refer to being in relation to others, and being in relation to oneself.

Martín Santos' translation of Heidegger's basic definitions of the human condition and his own conclusions can be seen as closely relevant to the human situation and its developing stages as they are depicted in Tiempo de silencio.

The novel itself is rich in psychological and ideological insights. Its theme is that of the classical novel: "el plantamiento

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<sup>6</sup>For further reference to Heidegger see below, Introduction.

<sup>7</sup>In a questionnaire sent to him by Janet Winecoff-Díaz and dated 21st June, 1962, Martín Santos clearly stated that he was particularly interested in Heidegger's philosophy. See Winecoff Díaz's "Luis Martín Santos and the Contemporary Spanish Novel," Hispania, 51 (May 1968), pp. 232-3.



que el hombre hace de su propio destino".<sup>8</sup> Pedro's successor in the posthumous and as yet unpublished Tiempo de destrucción, Agustín, has a similar transcendental purpose: "la realización del destino" (Apólogos...., p. 148). Tiempo de silencio is a novel about human personality, destiny and the tragic deterioration of both. The plot shows a pathetically inadequate character who is at the mercy of circumstances and unable to cope with situations outside his limited field of reference. Pedro, a cancer research specialist, is a man of great intellectual calibre and an expert scientist, but, as the police inspector Similiano observes, intelligence is not synonymous with human sufficiency and rational competence: "Ustedes, los inteligentes, son siempre los más torpes. Nunca puedo explicar por qué precisamente ustedes, los hombres que tienen una cultura y una educación, han de ser los que más se dejan enredar" (p. 203). This existential insufficiency is the decisive characteristic of the protagonist whose progressive alienation and unhappy destiny Martín Santos sets out to portray.

In a letter to Ricardo Domenech the author of Tiempo de silencio defined the creed of "realismo dialéctico" which it was his intention to apply in that novel: "Creo que hay que pasar de la simple descripción estática de las enajenaciones, para plantear la real dinámica de las contradicciones en actu."<sup>9</sup> What he hoped to depict in the novel was "una figura interior, la forma de un movimiento espiritual" (Apólogos...., p. 145), a purpose consonant with Jean Pouillon's claim that "ce que le roman veut exprimer c'est le développement

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<sup>8</sup>J. Bloch-Michel, La "Nueva Novela" (Madrid: Guadarrama, 1967), p. 38.

<sup>9</sup>R. Domenech, "Luis Martín Santos," Ínsula, 208 (marzo de 1964), p. 4.

temporel d'un personnage saisi dans sa realité psychologique."<sup>10</sup> This theory has a close relevance to the interrelated themes of time and the rhythm of human experience, as expressed in Tiempo de silencio. These are two central themes on which Mary Seale has commented in her interesting, though in places debatable, article: "Tiempo de silencio is a contribution to the exploration of the individual man's dilemma coming out of the nineteenth century idea of biological continuity and of life as the realization of a vital force as modified by the twentieth century's subjective awareness of the individual as a lone figure in a world whose nature seems to preclude the fixed law and the absolute."<sup>11</sup> Now this is exactly the object of the Existentialists' consideration. Shermann Eoff, drawing attention to the conception of time and history in Existentialism, states that "Evolution in the spatio-temporal world is accepted as a matter of fact, but it is scorned as a source of knowledge concerning man's essential nature... Human existence is visualized not as a process but as situation, in which relationships are horizontal rather than vertical." He adds that for Sartre in L'Être et le néant, "the temporalization of consciousness is a flat movement, not a vertical process toward a cause," and concludes that "origin and destiny, therefore, cannot be signified as meaningful background or purposeful direction."<sup>12</sup> Set within the physical bounds of historical time is another existential category of temporality whose articulations may only be gauged by situational experience. Jean Wahl comments on the special significance of time in Existentialist ideology. A basic

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<sup>10</sup> Pouillon, Temps et roman, p. 31.

<sup>11</sup> Mary Seale, op. cit., p. 52.

<sup>12</sup> Eoff, The Modern Spanish Novel, p. 214.



presupposition is that "Existence is temporality, continuous becoming, a task," and a becoming that "grows out of choices and decisions..." Using a revealing comparison, Wahl continues that "the Kierkegaardian notion of becoming, and the existential notion in general, are different from the Hegelian notion of becoming. For time, as Hegel sees it, is a continuous becoming, a becoming that is rational and explicable. Kierkegaardian time, on the other hand, is a discontinuous becoming, made up of crises, advancing by leaps and bounds; it is an inexplicable becoming, containing irreducibly novel elements - the upshots of our decisions. Time, for Hegel, is the becoming of the Idea. For Kierkegaard, it is the becoming of the human individual himself."<sup>13</sup>

The nature of time in Tiempo de silencio is inseparable from the rhythm of Pedro's experience. The author illustrates in practical terms his assertion that "la única posibilidad de captar la realidad dialéctica en su devenir constituyente la logra el hombre cuando él mismo va incluido en el proceso" (Apólogos...., p. 138). To adopt **Berdyayev's** triple classification, cosmic and historical time — the realms of chronology — are but minimally represented in the novel. Time is rendered, rather, as an existential category dependent on the individual's experience of temporality. Chronological 'time as backcloth' is accounted for in the novel, but on the most superficial of levels; the action takes place over an apparent period of five days whose fragmented segments are clearly linked through an obvious night-day

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<sup>13</sup>J. Wahl, Philosophies of Existence, pp. 31 and 50.

action sequence. The essential subject-matter of Tiempo de silencio relates to Pedro's very being and his capacity for self-realization in the course of his destiny. The "becoming" that the action depicts is none other than that of "the human individual himself". Consequently it is analogous with Kierkegaardian time as "a discontinuous becoming, made up of crises, advancing by leaps and bounds" (cf. Wahl).

Faced with the task of giving the appropriate formal expression to this subject-matter, Martín Santos was in a position to construct a technically advanced chronomorphous novel in the early 60's as a result of the development which the Spanish novel as a whole had undergone in this respect.<sup>14</sup> Experiments with structure had by now reached a level of sophistication unattained in the works of Gómez de la Serna and Pérez de Ayala, however audacious and innovatory. Currents of ideology had also been firmly assimilated into the mid-century body of Spanish letters. The ontological view of life and time first professed in Spain by outstanding figures like Unamuno and Antonio Machado was now an established attitude amongst thinkers like José Gaos and José Ferrater Mora.<sup>15</sup> Martín Santos' formal expression of the trope of temporality in Tiempo de silencio illustrates the level of refinement now attained in the creation of structures which would undermine and replace the fictional paradigm adopted by novelists of the mid- and late nineteenth century.

Time for those writers is the time, for example, of Galdós' Episodios nacionales. Taken for granted as dependable and chronologically

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<sup>14</sup>See below, Introduction.

<sup>15</sup>This theme is dealt with in Le temps et la mort dans la philosophie espagnole contemporaine, cited.



consistent — historical, in an uncomplicated sense — it was merely accepted as part of a comprehensible outer reality, a continuous external medium or context. Such a view of time was unhesitatingly adopted even by Baroja, notwithstanding his general scepticism. Unamuno and Azorín, as we have seen, reveal a more modern consciousness of time's complexity. In this respect Augusto Pérez's hypothesis in Niebla of a time which goes both forward and back (in contrast to the on-going time of historia and the timelessness of intrahistoria) marks an important step forward, but one which, unlike Azorín's equally significant cyclical theory of time, does not find expression in the structure of Unamuno's novels. It remains, that is, a mere concept in the mind of an individual character with no impact on the novelist's practice.

Martín Santos, in keeping with the new sensibility represented principally by Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Sartre, goes beyond the oversimplified nineteenth-century view and offers an ontological perspective of temporal reality hinted at by Unamuno but not developed in the medium of fiction. In terms of situational sequence and development, Pedro's experience of time may be defined by an abstract formula illustrative of a dialectical process. Pedro moves from potentiality through actuality to ultimate tragic authenticity. This is represented at the plot level by his progressing from the neutral "mundanidad" to the anguish of "care" which results from his professional indiscretion and which is highlighted in the prison sequence, and finally to the moral and spiritual castration of the closing phase. This process of deterioration is also described in implicit symbolic terms as a relentless cancer. In short, the author's opinion that "para nosotros proceso dialéctico significa que, a partir de un conflicto entre

contrarios en lugar de una simple anulación o sustracción, se origina una nueva totalidad" (Apólogos...p. 137), is illustrated in detail by Pedro's destiny.<sup>16</sup>

This is in no way the first time that a Gestalt of this nature appears in the Spanish novel of the twentieth century. As we have seen, Pachico Zabalbide undergoes a Hegelian course of spiritual development and the structure of Augusto Pérez's destiny bears a close resemblance to Pedro's as a movement from potentiality through actuality to ultimate tragic authenticity. It is Martín Santos' more complex and thorough structural expression of this notion which merits our attention here. Pedro's Gestalt, or his ontologically determined dialectic, is a structural whole which, as such, is at least the sum of its parts. His total development is the synthetic result of those specific crucial events which befall him. The pivotal points of his behaviour and experience, commensurable with those Kierkegaardian "leaps and bounds", are his performing the fatal abortion without due legal discretion, his frightened escape into hiding, the capitulation under stress of interrogation and his failing to take note of Amador's advice to leave Madrid. These "decisions", made in specific "situations", form the framework of his discontinuous becoming which terminates in existential collapse.

Let us now examine the development of Pedro's circumstances and fortune. There are five phases in the individual destiny portrayed in the novel:

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<sup>16</sup>José Ortega studies this topic in his article entitled "Realismo dialéctico de Martín Santos en Tiempo de silencio," Revista de Estudios Hispánicos, III, 1 (abril 1969).



1. Pages 7 - 60, the initial neutrality of his situation. Description of his professional and social positions: isolation.
2. Pages 61 - 114, an articulation towards complexity. Contact with sordid reality: the brothel and Florita's abortion.
3. Pages 114 - 167, psychological development. Crescendo of uneasiness illustrated by gauche social behaviour and accentuated by the order for an autopsy. Bewildered escape into hiding, then detention.
4. Pages 167 - 206, crisis. Imprisonment, confession under pressure. Defenceless feelings of guilt.
5. Pages 206 - 240, Pedro's private, frustrated apocalypse. Loss of grant and job; Dorita is murdered; Pedro, dejected and nonplussed, leaves Madrid.

To adopt Heideggerian terminology, Pedro, at the beginning of the novel, is necessarily "en la mundanidad del mundo" (Apólogos... p. 120). He is a cancer-research specialist and lives in a pensión with three protective women: this is his context of life. But how limited are his mentality and experience. In the novel's opening scene Pedro appears as a man wrapped up in his profession but divorced from, and apparently uninterested in, the outside world. The precise motive for his not answering the telephone, in the very first sentences of the book, is not disclosed but it could be fear, reluctance, indifference or ineptitude: he hands the telephone over to his assistant Amador and then returns to his microscope, a concrete symbol of his

limited field of vision. A few moments later, "suena otra vez el teléfono. Lo olvido." When he eventually acknowledges its existence, it is only as a scientific object whose purpose is purely professional: "detente, coge el receptor - emisor negro, ordena al Ministro del ramo, dile que la investigación, oh, Amador, bien vale un ratón" (pp. 7-8). This restricted mentality and behaviour are illustrated by many instances in the opening phase of the novel's action. For example, while Pedro and Amador are walking along the streets of Madrid, Amador eyes passing girls with enthusiasm; don Pedro, however, "hacía caso omiso de estas actividades marginales de su secuaz [e] ... imaginó las posibles consecuencias de la degeneración a que la cepa M.N.A. debía haber llegado motivada tanto por la casi inevitable posibilidad de un cruce espurio en lugar del eugénico estrictamente incestuoso, cuanto por el ambiente en exceso diferente del illinoico original..." (p. 28). Natural human sexual responsiveness is replaced by the mere academic interest in animal reproduction. Similarly, when his landlady mentions the war, Pedro, unconcerned, politely replies: "desgraciadamente ... yo soy pacífico. No me interesan más luchas que las de los virus con los anticuerpos" (p. 39). Isolated in an ivory tower of scientific research, Pedro's actual relations with other human beings are limited in depth and expression: his yo is vulnerable and his circunstancia restricted. His is a routine existence of "el ser cotidiano": "la determinación ontológica del ser cotidiano es el estado de caído. Tiene el sentido de que el ser-ahí ha caído de sí mismo y se ha dejado absorber por el mundo..." (Apologos..., p. 124). This is represented by the colourless neutrality of his initial circumstances.

The second phase of Pedro's developing course of destiny comprises



a confrontation with basic reality, as represented by the café, the eccentric painter, the brothel and, especially, by the horrors of abortion. The ontological significance of this conflict with previous experience is overwhelming. Leaving the hermetic security of a laboratory where his activity was based on theory and research, Pedro is thrown into the deep end of life in all its economic and social squalor. In the cafeteria he is perforce in - the - world, albeit reluctantly: "En cuanto entra, comprende que está equivocado, que venir a este café era precisamente lo que no le apetecía, que él prefería haber seguido evocando fantasmas de hombres que derramaron sus propios cánceres sobre papeles blancos (Pedro being the prime example). Pero ya está allí y la naturaleza adherente del octopus lo detiene... Ya está incorporado a una comunidad de la que, a pesar de todo, forma parte y de la que no podrá deshacerse con facilidad. Al entrar allí, la ciudad ...de él ha tomado nota: existe" (p. 65). Pedro fails to cope with the situation in the brothel and runs away, "intentando dar olvido a lo que de absurdo tiene la vida" (p. 92), but it at least awakens him to critical self-awareness, analogous to what Heidegger calls "care": "Cura se refiere a una esencial manera de ser necesaria y fundamental del hombre mediante la cual éste se cuida de los seres o cosas del mundo y del mundo en su totalidad y de su situación en el mundo y de sí mismo en cada momento como base a toda otra posible actitud" (Apólogos..., pp. 125-6). It is the final event of Saturday night and Sunday morning which violently shatters the previous artificial peacefulness of Pedro's "being". The obligation to perform an abortion is a test-situation which he is unable to master and conclude satisfactorily. Having done the best he could, "don Pedro soltó al fin la

pieza niquelada manchada de rojo y salió andando rápido, como perdido, queriendo estar muy lejos de aquella noche y de las andanzas locas en que la noche le había sumergido..." (p. 114). Significantly he thinks of himself as the object-victim of circumstance: he has not engineered any cause; instead, events and effects have befallen him. Pedro has now reached a further point of alienation, since he denies himself any positive influence on his destiny: he recognises his own powerlessness and the dominance of externals, but does nothing to remedy them.

In the third stage his existential malaise assumes ever-growing proportions. His is not the overtly expressed and reverberating anguish of Unamuno, or the sinister Schopenhaurian pessimism of the early Azorín, but the restrained doubt and bewilderment of Kafka's K. or Joaquín in Sender's *El fugitivo*.<sup>17</sup> His companion Matías tries to distract Pedro's attention from the disaster's critical aftermath by affording him social activity. Pedro's behaviour is, however, unconfident and gauche. He is increasingly alienated, both from externals and from himself: "no había hablado apenas Pedro en el trayecto hasta casa de Matías desde las lóbregas miserias de su alcoba mancillada. El repaso de los hechos acaecidos no se le presentaba todavía como sucesión coherente y ordenada, sino como ese conjunto de apuntes e instantáneas que un reportero imaginativo tiene extendidos sobre su mesa de trabajo mientras que espera que la inspiración creadora le insuffle el sentido todavía no del todo transparente de la historia" (p. 123). The recent series of events appears arbitrary to him and

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<sup>17</sup>Shermann Eoff's chapter on Sartre and Sender, "The Challenge of Absurdity," in *The Modern Spanish Novel*, cit., provides much illuminating information applicable here.



lacking in continuity; this fragmentation is a primary dimension of alienation, according to Albert Levi's painstaking definition.<sup>18</sup>

Alienation has a further, social, dimension: isolation. Pedro's unrelatedness to his social context is depicted in a succinct image which describes his movement around the room: "su deambular de boya sin amarras por el salón lleno de desconocidos" (p. 138). Shortly after this scene the narrative's third stage ends with the news of the autopsy and Pedro's detention.

The fourth stage of his development, imprisonment and interrogation, constitutes the most ontologically critical situation of his destiny. His is a solitary confinement which may be considered symbolic of estranged man's position in the world; the Existentialists' primary themes of situation and test, responsibility and self-sufficiency, freedom and choice and dread, are all represented in this allegorical tableau, a twentieth-century Bajada a los infiernos or Cueva de Montesinos. Claustrophobic imprisonment and the naked, inhospitable fact of being-there (Dasein) are the basic material of many works illustrative of the existential theme. In Sender's novel, Joaquín the fugitive perches precariously in a belfry whilst his pursuers scour the town searching for him; the characters of Huis Clos are similarly hemmed in; K. waits to be called to trial and Camus' Meursault writes the account of his enigmatic fate from a prison cell, like Pascual Duarte. A situation like this forces a demanding toma de conciencia on the confined incumbent: without God, man is reduced to his own resources and must

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<sup>18</sup>A. Levi, "Existentialism and the Alienation of Man," an invaluable introduction to this most important subject, in Phenomenology and Existentialism, edited by Lee and Mandelbaum (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1969), pp. 243-65.

prove himself or be lost. Don Pedro belongs to the luckless category of the losers. "La toma de conciencia se acompaña de un hacerse cargo responsable. En el hacerse cargo se inicia la desenajación," writes Martín Santos in his essay Dialéctica, totalización y concienciación (Apólogos..., p. 139). Pedro fails the test and remains alienated. A defeated man, he is perplexed about "la metamorfosis por él mismo sufrida, de la que no tenía total conocimiento" (p. 168). When one of "los omnipotentes habitantes de las oficinas" (p. 169) begins questioning him, Pedro's "incapacidad para comprensión de preguntas sencillas" (p. 168) is painfully manifest in his bewildered non-answers, on which the author comments with pointed precision:

- Así que usted... (suposición capciosa y sorprendente)
- No. Yo no... (refutación indignada y sorprendida)
- Pero no querrá usted hacerme creer que...(hipótesis inverosímil y hasta absurda)
- No, pero yo... (reconocimiento consternado)
- Usted sabe perfectamente ... (lógica, lógica, lógica)
- Yo no he ... (simple negativa a todas luces insuficiente)
- Tiene que reconocer usted que ... (lógica)
- Pero... (adversativa apenas si viable)
- Quiero que usted comprenda ...(cálidamente humano)
- No.
- etc. (p. 169).

He is then led through a labyrinth of corridors to "su ubicación definitiva en este infierno" (p. 171). In the cell Pedro yields to the most frenzied mental activity and self-analysis; he is confronted with his conscience and his mind is in turn divided and confronted with itself. He talks to himself in both first and second person form. To this probing question "¿Por qué fui?" his immediate reaction is "No pensar. No hay por qué pensar en lo que ya está hecho. Es inútil intentar recorrer otra vez los errores que uno ha cometido ... Estás bien, estás bien. No te puede pasar nada porque tú no has hecho nada... Tú no la mataste. Estaba muerta. No estaba muerta. Tú la mataste. Por



qué dices tú? - Yo" (pp. 176-7). This grammatical device tangibly expresses the dispersion of his personality, the division or fragmentation of alienation.

Much of his thought reflects problematic Existentialist themes: "Si estas aquí serenamente no es un fracaso. Triunfas del miedo. El hombre imperturbable, el que sigue siendo imperturbable, entero, puede decir que triunfa, aunque todos, todos, todos crean que está cagado de miedo... Si guarda su fondo de libertad que le permite elegir lo que le pasa, elegir lo que le está aplastando" (p. 177). He returns to the theme of freedom at the end of this sustained passage of interior monologue: "Tienes libertad para elegir el dibujo que tú quieres hacer [on the cell-wall] porque tu libertad sigue existiendo también ahora. Eres un ser libre para dibujar cualquier dibujo o bien hacer una raya cada        día que vaya pasando como han hecho otros..." (p. 180). But this is a grotesque parody of existential freedom or choice, and a deliberately ironic treatment of his character by Martín Santos, whose prime concern is to depict an individual with no powers of decision or self-affirmation. This is highlighted by the principal interrogation. The detective, Similiano, in a manner obvious to the reader but unnoticed by the gullible prisoner, lulls Pedro into a false sense of security, confuses him with a devious progression of coherent logical ploys and bullies him into making a confession of homicide: "Pedro sintió la verdad que demostraban en su perfecta concatenación las circunstancias rigurosamente concordes como los eslabones de una cadena de silogismos. ...Y era verdad que, por todo ello, sentía una culpabilidad abrumadora, una culpabilidad cierta y tremenda" (p. 198). Pedro is so confused that he accepts an ultimately false explanation of his conduct merely

because he feels it is a coherent account. The testimony he signs is not a faithful representation of the circumstances: but, "oía caer estas palabras con interno asentimiento. Efectivamente así habían ocurrido las cosas. No tenía ningún objeto empezar a gritar que no ...". He feels convinced of his guilt and sure that "gracias al castigo el equilibrio se restablecería en este mundo poco comprensible donde él había estado dando saltos de títere con la cabeza llena de humo mentiroso" (p. 199). Such is the paradox of his position. He is bewildered, defenceless and alienated, both from himself and the circumstantial world around him. We see him as illustrating on the particular level Northrop Frye's opinion that "the root of this psychological aspect of alienation is the sense that man has lost control, if ever he had it, over his own destiny."<sup>19</sup>

Heidegger contends that dreadful experiences make man authentically aware of his being; by "dread" is meant an irrational fear of something unknown. "We are thrown in a world. Dread brings us face to face with this thrownness."<sup>20</sup> Pedro's situation in jail is an unadorned condition of "ser-ahí", and his reaction one of painful authenticity. "Todo ser-ahí tiene un encontrarse," writes Martín Santos (Apólogos..., p. 133): Pedro's monumental confrontation with himself is that "encontrarse especial, el de la angustia... En la angustia el mundo pierde todo su significado. Aparece el ser-en-el-mundo en cuanto tal. El ser-ahí se encuentra ante una radical inhospitalidad ..." (Apólogos..., p. 125). Pedro "is" because he "cares", and he

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<sup>19</sup>Northrop Frye, The Modern Century, p. 24.

<sup>20</sup>Michael Gelven, A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), p. 113.



"cares" because he cannot see life's coherence or unifying logic and sense "en este mundo poco comprensible" (p. 199). Differing from K. in his awareness of guilt, he nevertheless suffers the same oppression; like K's, his is a nightmare of un-reason. It is left to someone else, therefore, to secure his release; Pedro is allowed to go free when the dead Florita's mother informs the police of his innocence.

The fifth section is an eventful one. Pedro loses his research grant but integrates into the family life at his boarding-house, becoming Dorita's unofficial fiancé. On an evening out at a kermesse, however, the dead Florita's chulo, Cartucho, avenges what he considers to be her murder by stabbing Pedro's own Dorita to death, at the moment when Pedro is most confident of happiness. The novel closes, as it began, with an extended monologue. This is a second, cruel encontrarse with which Pedro's destiny confronts him. He sees Cartucho's twisted motivation, but there is still a vast element of cosmic injustice which prevents him from accepting the fateful course of events in their totality: "pero no me parece comprensible que las cosas hayan tenido que ocurrir de esa manera, esta misma noche ya, sin esperar un poco" (p. 233). A blind force of destructive fate seems to Pedro to have singled him out for misfortune, misfortune so great that it leaves him ultimately a broken man: "Yo el destruido, yo el hombre al que no se le dejó que hiciera lo que tenía que hacer, yo a quien en nombre del destino se me dijo: 'Basta' y se me mandó para el Príncipe Pío ..." (p. 236), whence, like Baroja's Andres Hurtado, some 50 years before, he will take a train to his medical post in a provincial back-water town. His spiritual condition is utterly negative. An ominous neutrality of temperament (pp. 233-5) encloses an overwhelming feeling of nothingness: "Y yo, sin asomo de

desesperación, porque estoy como vacío, porque me han pasado una gamuza y me han limpiado las vísceras por dentro... "¿Y por qué no estoy desesperado? Es cómodo ser eunuco, es tranquilo, estar desprovisto de testículos, es agradable a pesar de estar castrado tomar el aire y el sol mientras uno se amojama en silencio..." (pp.237-8). Existence in contemporary civilisation acquires a pessimistic definition: "por aquí abajo nos arrastramos y nos vamos yendo hacia el sitio donde tenemos que ponernos silenciosamente a esperar silenciosamente que los años vayan pasando y que silenciosamente nos vayamos hacia donde se van todas las florecillas del mundo" (p. 238).<sup>21</sup> To Kierkegaard, silence represented God's abandoning man; here, with only a minimal change of emphasis, it refers to man's isolation in an alienated and mechanized world lacking in absolutes.<sup>22</sup>

At this juncture, Pedro's awareness of himself and the world - his "cura" - reaches its most detailed point of analogy with Heideggerian theory. No ontological scheme would be complete without a consideration of death; only with this may a total perspective of Being be attained. Dasein is being-in-the-world; Sein-zum-tode, being-towards-death, is the source of dread, and dread is the ultimate symptom of Dasein's being, "care". Pedro's numb, emotive-spiritual void is an indication of the completely negative tenor of his attitude. His abstraction from the content of his own life, illustrated by his impassive self-analysis: "¿Pero yo, por qué no estoy más desesperado? ¿Por qué me estoy dejando capar?" (p. 237), is the ultimate in self-alienation. He senses the

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<sup>21</sup>A pun is probably intended in the word "florecilla", since the girl who died from the abortion was called Florita.

<sup>22</sup>Thab Hassan offers ten interpretations of the phenomenon of silence in his adventurous The Dismemberment of Orpheus: toward a Post-Modern Literature, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1971).



dispersion of his own being and the division and distance between his actual and virtual selves. His personality has been destroyed and his destiny removed from his sphere of action or control. He is so overpowered by abulia, so bereft of any unifying moral strength, that he cannot even commit suicide, the positive act of protest made by Andrés Hurtado and, we suppose, by Augusto Pérez. As an heir to the metaphysic which characterised the fictional heroes in the novels of the '98, Pedro may also be compared, at this final stage of his development, with the ultimately static Antonio Azorin.

The protagonist's dialectical development, then, from neutrality through disruption to catastrophe is complete. His disjointed destiny is a process of alienation which has been realized through the indifferent medium of time: "and because outside ourselves - beyond the 'in-me' or the 'for-me' in which man recognises himself - no values or archetypes exist, or because man's own adventure and compromise alone can establish them, life becomes fragmented into discreet situations."<sup>23</sup> Pedro's own "adventure" has failed, his alienation has become progressively more severe and his life has been deprived of coherence, continuity and ultimate meaning. Luis Martín Santos has complied with Pouillon's definition by expressing "le développement temporel d'un personnage saisi dans sa réalité psychologique,"<sup>24</sup> a development and a reality whose fragmentary structure is but the reflection of a defenceless individual's continual failure to dominate circumstances.

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<sup>23</sup>Mariano Picón Salas, The Ignoble Savage, cited, p. 40.

<sup>24</sup>Pouillon, Temps et roman, p. 157.

Pedro's temporal awareness develops in line with his process of destiny. The early stage of neutrality is comparable with the Heidegger's concept of the "estado de caído", where the individual's actual self is separated from its potential self. "El elemento temporal que hace posible la caída es el presentar. Cuanto más impropia es la existencia, tanto más huye ante su-propio-poder-ser, tanto más se cierra sobre el presente y crece más su olvidar" (Apólogos..., p. 131).

Pedro, in this pre-authentic stage, lives in Heidegger's "tiempo vulgar", in "el tiempo concebido como sucesión de horas y numerado por algún ser-ante-los-ojos que se caracteriza por su ritmicidad... El tiempo vulgar como infinito dentro del que transcurriría la existencia del hombre en sus sucesivos horas es el que corresponde a la existencia cotidiana que así determinada no sólo es un 'aspecto del ser' sino un 'modo del ser' diferente de la existencia propia" (Apólogos..., p. 133).

The limitations of Pedro's life-style, as distinct from his existence or being, have already been indicated; they are reflected in his curtailed experience of time at this stage of his development. His thoughts are rooted in one major topic, mice and cancer-research, a limited mental horizon excluding any future dimension of existence. It is only after the abortion that Pedro forsakes the neutrality of being for actual ontological authenticity. Firstly as a fugitive from justice, and subsequently when committed to prison, he is haunted by the guilt attached to the immediate past and worried by ominous premonitions. Reduced to his own mental resources, he tries to concentrate on the present, but his mind slips backwards and forwards into the realms of further discomfort:



Estaba borracho. Yo.

No pensar. No pensar. Mirar a la pared. Estarse pasando el tiempo, mirando a la pared. No tienes que pensar... Estás aquí quieto, tranquilo. Tú eres bueno, tú has querido hacerlo bien ... Tú no tenías ninguna mala idea. Lo hiciste lo mejor que supiste. Si otra vez tuvieras que volver a hacerlo...

¡Imbécil!

No pienses. No pensar. No pensar. Estate tranquilo. No va a pasar nada. No tienes que tener miedo de todos. Si pasa lo peor. Si te ocurre lo peor que te pueda ocurrir. Lo peor. Si realmente creen que tú lo hiciste. Si te están esperando para aplastarte con el peso de la pena más gorda que puedan inventar para aplastarte. Ponte en lo peor... (pp. 178-9).

The fluctuation of his thought, as the tense-structure indicates, is purely temporal in nature: from such consciousness "care" derives.

It is anguish, for Heidegger, which releases man from the narrow confines of "el ser cotidiano": the jail sequence confronts Pedro with himself in the anguish of self-analysis and vulnerability.

It is bewilderment, too, about the metaphysical logic of life which permeates his final thoughts, distinctly reminiscent of Baroja: "¿El hombre lobo para el hombre?...Pero no me parece comprensible que las cosas hayan tenido que ocurrir de esa manera..." (p. 233). The third but negative part of his dialectical development is a tragic condition of anaesthetized silence and castration. Though morally negative, it is nevertheless, an ontologically authentic state of being, since Pedro's awareness and "care" have been acutely awakened. He declares in philosophic and fatalistic mood his belief that man is obliged to drift through a life of tedium and natural indifference to a senseless goal, where he will wait in silence before being condemned to go "hacia donde se van todas las florecillas del mundo" (p. 238). Such critical awareness constitutes the highest degree of ontological experience of temporality. The future is the primal dimension of time

for Kierkegaard and Heidegger, and death its certainty; man's anguished consciousness of his "ser-para-la muerte" (Apólogos..., p. 127), is ultimate proof of Being.

The Existentialist emphasis on time and situation is reflected in Tiempo de silencio. The author-narrator refers to and analyses human temporality in terms akin to those used by Heidegger and Sartre. In addition to the notions of project and becoming, derived from Kierkegaard, and to that of Gestalt, the concepts of the ecstasy, the instant and the situation also appear in Luis Martín Santos' novel. The author describes Pedro and Matías' "peor momento" of inebriated discomfort with the unlikely and ironical aid of philosophical terminology:

Pero incluso el peor momento nunca es más que eso: un momento. ¡Hasta tal punto es limitada la naturaleza humana!. Aunque en un dado momento el hombre parece que va a escapar a su propio ser ya sea en el salto del atleta, ya en el giro de la bailarina, ya en el éxtasis que le pone en contacto directo con la diinidad, ya en la simple inebriedad en que se constituye a sí mismo como pura euforia desprovisto de temporalidad, estos destellos de algo eterno se muestran defectivamente caducos y transitorios...

Pasó, pues, también para ellos el mal momento con su carga de eternidad y llegó el instante en que...comenzaron a sentirse menos necesitados del mutuo apoyo antigravitatorio (pp. 77-8).

"El mal momento con su carga de eternidad" recalls Kierkegaard's concept of the instant as the encounter of time and eternity. On another occasion, Similiano, the detective, defines the ontological significance of the critical situation and instant in purely Heideggerian terms: "la situación límite, el borde del abismo, la decisión decisiva, la primera vivencia. ¡El instante! La crisis a partir de la cual cambia el proyecto del existente. La elección. La libertad encarnada" (p. 159).



"The instant, for Heidegger, is the moment when with resolute decision we take ourselves upon ourselves and, uniting our origins and projects, accept the responsibility of what we are."<sup>25</sup> Martín Santos' thought and terminology are here fully within the Existentialist mould.

The most succinct example of existential temporality in relation to the critical situation is afforded by the sequence of Pedro's experience while he is imprisoned. The narrator describes the jail's general properties: time appears homogeneous and monotonous, elastic and elongated, and totally divorced from lunar or solar chronology, since in the cells "la luz es eterna. No se apaga ni de día ni de noche" (p. 173); an extended and uniform silence prevails "en este infierno en el que [the prisoners] guardan un profundo silencio que tan sólo rompen con intervalos de varios años-luz para solicitar, ya la gracia de una micción, ya la de una cerilla..." (p. 171). Enclosed in a temporal vacuum, the prisoners can only measure time according to daily routine: "Llegada la noche se da una manta parda al detenido. Llegado el día se le retira exigiéndole sea doblada por sus pliegos. Estos acontecimientos y los más banales del rancho o de la orina dan una forma de calendario a un tiempo que, por lo demás, se muestra uniformemente constituido de angustia y virtudes teologales" (p. 175). Thus, when Pedro is eventually removed from his cell to the interrogation room, he cannot judge exactly how long his stay in the cell has lasted: he is moved "después de un número de horas o de días o de noches difícilmente calculable" (p. 195).

Pedro's specific experience of time in the prison is a pure reflection of his very being, since there is nothing external to which he

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<sup>25</sup>Wahl, *op. cit.*, p. 56. Sartre, too, writes that "l'instant est insecable et intemporel..." *L'Être et le néant*, p. 176.

might relate himself, Unconfined in stark isolation and subject to the ever-increasing activity of his own consciousness, he is confronted with the prospect of indefinite reclusion. His initial reaction is to adopt an attitude of resignation: "Estar aquí quieto el tiempo que sea necesario. No moverse. Aprender a estar mirando un punto de la pared hasta ir, poco a poco, concentrándose en un vacío sin pensamiento" (p. 175). Particularly significant is his use of the reflexive verb at one stage of his monologue: "estarse pasando el tiempo" (p. 178), which indicates that time is indistinguishable from the self's experience. He continues: "No pasa nada [here in jail]. Sólo un tiempo. Un tiempo que queda fuera de mi vida, entre paréntesis. Fuera de mi vida tonta." His experience of time renders his sense of being inordinately acute: "La vida de fuera está suspendida con todas sus cosas tontas. Han quedado fuera. La vida desnuda. El tiempo, sólo el tiempo llena este vacío de las cosas tontas y de las personas tontas. Todo tiene que resbalar, resbala sobre mí, no sufro nada absolutamente. Cualquiera pensará que estaré sufriendo. Pero yo no sufro. Existo, vivo." Heightened temporal awareness and supreme ontological experience are one and the same for Pedro: "El tiempo pasa, me llena, voy en el tiempo, nunca he vivido el tiempo de mi vida que pasa como ahora que estoy quieto mirando a un punto de la pared... Solo aquí, qué bien, me parece que estoy encima de todo. No me puede pasar nada. Yo soy el que paso. Vivo. Vivo." (p. 179).

There are various grounds for comparison between Tiempo de silencio and Camus' L'Étranger, but we may here isolate for present attention the depiction, in both novels, of temporal experience in prison. Meursault's predicament implies one major problem: the need



to kill time. "Toute la question, encore une fois, était de tuer le temps...J'avais bien lu qu'on finissait par perdre la notion du temps en prison. Mais cela n'avait pas beaucoup de sens pour moi. Je n'avais pas compris à quel point les jours pouvaient être à la fois longs et courts. Longs à vivre sans doute, mais tellement distendus qu'ils finissaient par déborder les uns sur les autres. Ils y perdaient leur nom. Les mots hier ou demain étaient les seuls qui gardaient un sens pour moi."<sup>26</sup> Pedro, too, is in a void-like temporal vacuum where his presence and responses are the only criteria of temporal reality: "eres un ser libre para dibujar cualquier dibujo o bien hacer una raya cada día que vaya pasando como han hecho otros, y cada siete días una raya más larga, porque eres libre de hacer las rayas todo lo largas que quieras y nadie te lo puede impedir..." (p. 130). Objective chronology is supplanted by factors of experience determined by the relative situation.

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<sup>26</sup>Reference is made to the Gallimard edition of L'Étranger, (Paris, 1957), pp. 116 & 118.

In some general notes on the contemporary novel, Paul Ilie rhetorically asks "¿No cabe asegurar que la gran crisis filosófica del siglo XX esta en el análisis del problema del Ser con su contrapartida artística en la experimentación de la forma?"<sup>27</sup> Tiempo de silencio illustrates both assumptions of his proposition. Time, which is a fundamental of the novel's content is also a factor of central importance to its formal structure. On a simple level, the continuity of cosmic nature is attested by the incorporation into the novel's external structure of an alternating night and day sequence. The opening pages, for example, refer to the end of a working day at the research laboratory, page 26 depicts "la mañana...", page 60 the "noche de sábado" etc. This superficial structure has little relevance, however, to Pedro's lived experience of time. As has been suggested, the importance of time in the novel is rhythmic and existential, and is principally reflected in the internal structure.<sup>28</sup>

Pedro's character develops in time with his experiencing a critical sequence of situations which confront him. We have compared the presentation of Pedro's destiny in the novel's internal structure with the general Existentialist conception of temporal experience as "a discontinuous becoming, made up of crises, advancing by leaps and bounds",<sup>29</sup> and have attempted to define his temporal becoming as a

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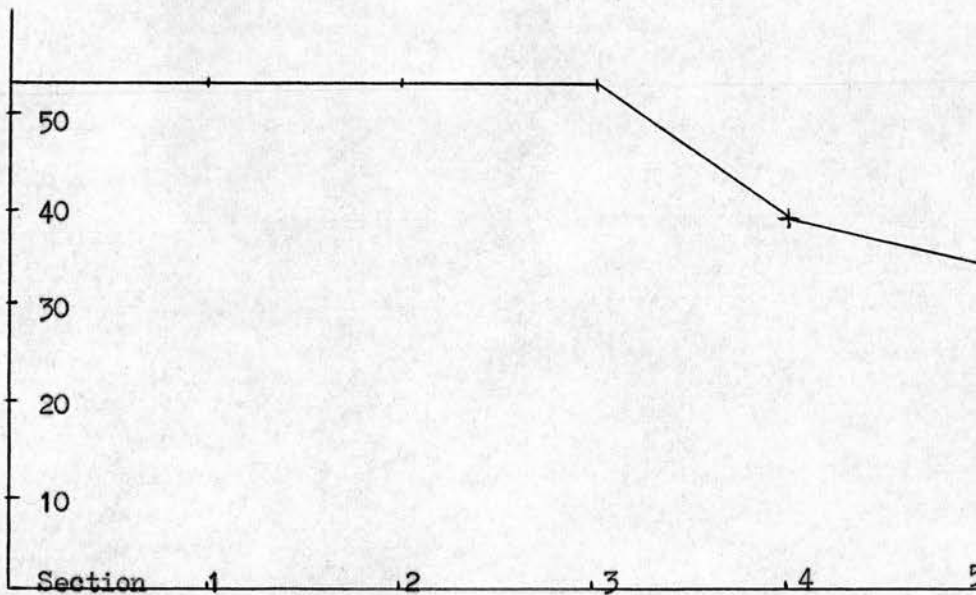
<sup>27</sup>Paul Ilie, La novelística de Camilo José Cela, cited, p. 230.

<sup>28</sup>The cosmic continuum is emphasised in Aldecoa's Parte de una historia as a positive value in human experience. Pedro's life is one of irremediable conflict and disvalue.

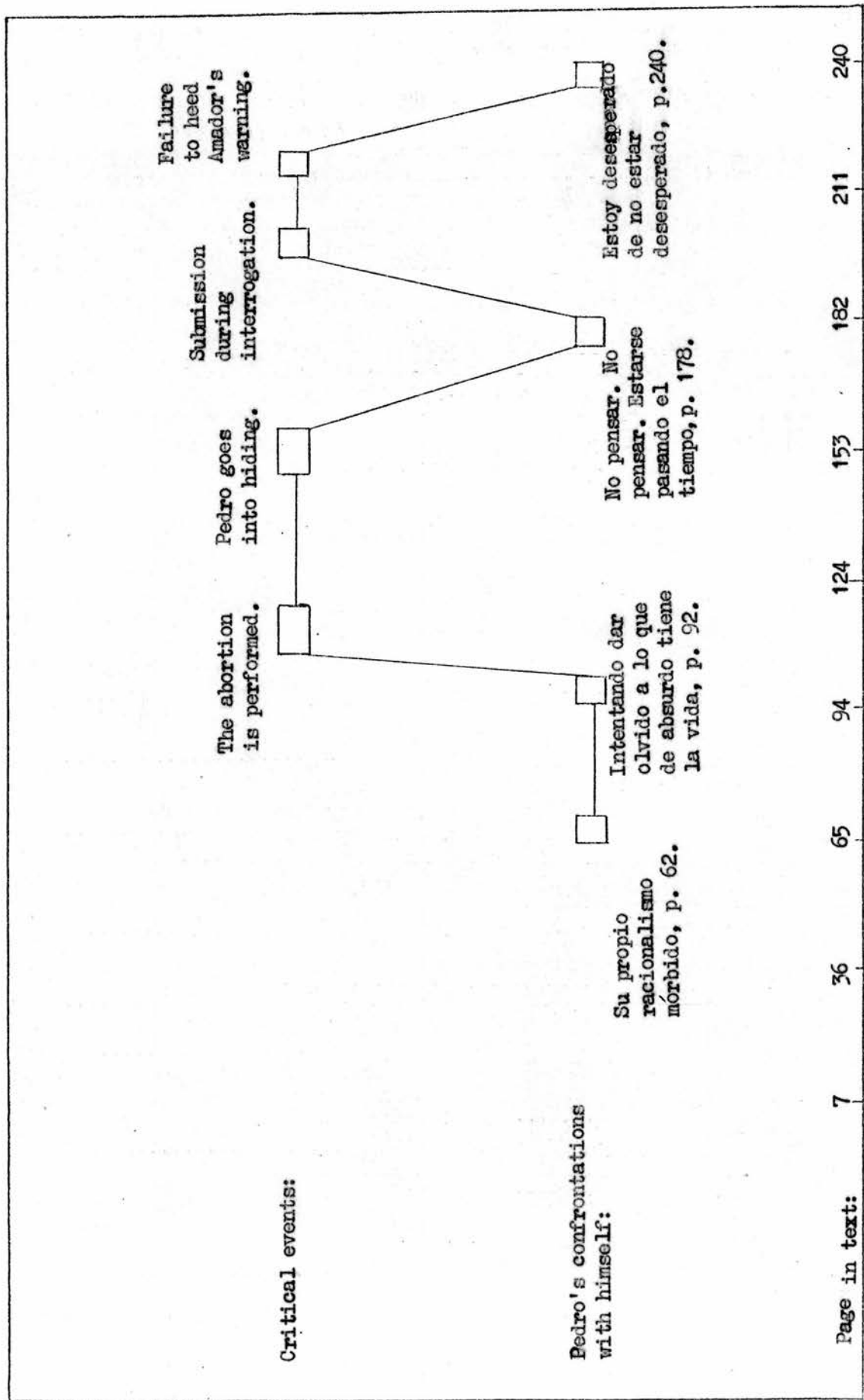
<sup>29</sup>J. Wahl, Philosophies of Existence, p. 50.



rhythmical pattern of experience deriving from his encounter with certain taxing situations. The articulations of his spiritual development may be expressed at a mechanical level of the book's structure by a relation between the critical events of the plot and their distribution throughout the 240-page text. The five structural sections referring to the stages of Pedro's evolving destiny stand together in a coherent relationship in terms of rhythmic form. The quantity of each section, measured in groups of pages, is as follows: 53, 53, 53, 39 and 34.



To this physically determined graph which depicts a simple rhythmic structure of decline may be added another whose purpose is to illustrate the correspondence of critical events or horizontal junctures to their place in the text as a vertical medium. A second rhythmic pattern is established by the counterpointing of Pedro's interior monologues, in which circumstances he is isolated and subjected to a toma de conciencia, and the four pivotal points of his destiny:





This second rhythmic structure reflects a Gestalt which is derived inextricably from Pedro's very experience. The temporal articulations of his destiny are governed by ontological factors which relegate external chronological detail to a plane of minor importance.

The discontinuous quality of Pedro's developing destiny is represented at the novel's formal level by fragmentation. However, in order to avoid repeating those considerations already made about discontinuity and its ideo-structural implications, in the chapter referring to Azorín, it is preferable to attend, instead, to another essential temporal function embodied in this novel's structure, the stream of consciousness.

Existentialism departs from the basic premise of man's encounter with himself. Heidegger and Sartre construct their ontological systems around the focal point of personal awareness, or "care": "el ser-ahí es un ser iluminado. La luz que lo ilumina es la cura" (Apólogos..., p. 131). The nearest material representation in fiction of the ontological function is the tableau of human consciousness, the depiction of mind at work. So it is that passages like Molly Bloom's interior monologue in Joyce's Ulysses or Benjie's solipsistic jabberings in Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury impress the reader as art-forms which present the human mind in its naked, essential being-in-the-world. Robert Humphrey's authoritative Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel offers some invaluable definitions of the terminology, nature, purpose and philosophical implications of this literary phenomenon. The creation of human consciousness in fiction, Humphrey states, "is a modern attempt to analyze human nature...The realm of life with which stream-of-consciousness literature is concerned is mental and spiritual

experience." The great achievement of Dorothy Richardson, James Joyce, William Faulkner and Virginia Woolf lies in the fact that "they have created a fiction centred on the core of human experience." The stream-of-consciousness novel has as its subject matter the consciousness of one or more of its characters; this is rendered by certain technical devices, the foremost of which is interior monologue. Although it is not a major part of his argument, Humphrey concludes that a fundamental difference between Zola and Dreiser on the one hand, and the stream of consciousness writers on the other, is that philosophical distinction between "a broad materialism and a generalized existentialism".<sup>30</sup> A.A. Mendilow adds to this argument by stating that "Heidegger's principle of indeterminacy has its equivalent in their [the novelists'] technique of the stream of consciousness;...they strive to express their sense of life as a sequence of non-causal impressions in which direction can be predicted only of the larger units, never of the smaller components."<sup>31</sup> Stream of consciousness literature thus deals specifically with man and his inner awareness: implied in this awareness may be the metaphysical considerations of Existentialist thought.

The distinction which Humphrey draws between Zola and Dreiser and the stream of consciousness writers throws some interesting light on our discussion of Tiempo de silencio; for Martín Santos, in fact, portrays a dual conflict in which Pedro is involved. He is struggling both against external forces of the social and material environment - the brothel, the chabolos, the police and Cartucho - and against the internal

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<sup>30</sup>R. Humphrey, Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel (University of California Press, Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1954), pp. 6, 7, 22 & 8 respectively.

<sup>31</sup>Mendilow, Time and the Novel, p. 8.



phenomena of his conscious mind. In accounting for both these levels of internal and external action, Martín Santos offers a synthetic vision of human reality and achieves a measure of structural equilibrium hitherto absent from the twentieth-century novel of Spain. His use of the stream-of-consciousness technique in Tiempo de silencio is an illustration of the marked degree of refinement now attained in the formal development of that novel. It is, once again, with Unamuno that a diachronic comparison may be made. It was he who first broke with the traditional mode of narrative presentation characterised by a differentiation and distancing between the narrator's external account and the protagonist's involvement in the action. Psychological conflict and interior action figure prominently in Unamuno's novels with the consequent reduction in importance of external factors. Although none of his novels would merit the description of 'stream-of-consciousness' in accordance with a rigorous application of the definition, the role of interior monologue in their structure is of fundamental value to the full development of the stream-of-consciousness technique in subsequent novels by, for example, J. Goytisolo, Matute, Sánchez Espeso and Martín Santos. In Tiempo de silencio reference to objective, external factors, the material par excellence of the nineteenth-century novel, is complemented by the detailed structural account of that purely subjective reality of consciousness.

On certain occasions in the novel Pedro appears in his pure capacity of a reflective human being: "el hombre es un animal meditativo" the author writes in a short article (Apólogos..., p. 38). Pedro's existence implies awareness of himself and of his context; the corollary is also true, that his awareness renders his existence authentic.

Significantly, the novel starts with a soliloquy and ends with an interior monologue, both by Pedro, a fact which suggests the ontological pre-eminence of consciousness. This is substantiated also by the author's deliberate technique of alternation between first and third person presentation as a means to emphasise the critical encounters of the self with itself. Pedro's soliloquies are proof of his existence. His awareness is modified throughout the course of his destiny, assuming the mature characteristics of "care" in that critical encontrarse in prison. This passage, (pp. 175-9), is a paradigm of direct interior monologue. "Interior monologue is ...the technique used in fiction for representing the psychic content and processes of character partly or entirely unuttered, just as these processes exist at various levels of conscious control before they are formulated for deliberate speech... Direct interior monologue is that type of interior monologue which is represented with negligible author-interference and with no auditor assumed."<sup>32</sup> The following extract offers an interesting illustration:

El destino fatal. La resignación. Estar aquí quieto el tiempo que sea necesario. No moverse. Aprender a estar mirando un punto de la pared hasta ir, poco a poco, concentrándose en un vacío sin pensamiento. Relajación autógena. Yoga. Estar tendido quieto. Tocar la pared despacio con una mano. Relax. Dominar la angustia. Pensar despacio. Saber que no pasa nada grave, que no hay más que esperar en silencio, que no puede pasar nada grave, hasta que el nudo se deshaga igual que se ha hecho. Estar tranquilo. Sentirse tranquilo. Llegar a encontrar refugio en la soledad, en la protección de las paredes. En la misma inmovilidad. No se está mal. No se está tan mal. Para qué pensar. No hay más que estar quieto. No pensar en nada. Llegar a hacer como si fuera un deseo propio estar quieto. Como si el estar quieto, escondido, fuera un deseo o un juego. Estar escondido todo el tiempo que quiera. Estar quieto todo el tiempo necesario. Aquí mientras estoy quieto, no me pasa nada. No puedo hacer nada; luego no puedo equivocarme. No puedo tomar ninguna resolución errónea. No puedo hacer nada mal. No puedo equivocarme.

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<sup>32</sup>Humphrey, op. cit., pp. 24-5.



No puedo perjudicarme. Estar tranquilo en el fondo. No puede ya pasar nada. Lo que va a pasar yo no lo puedo provocar. Aquí estoy hasta que me echen fuera y yo no puedo hacer nada por salir.

¿Por qué fui?

No pensar. No hay por qué pensar en lo que ya está hecho. Es inútil intentar recorrer otra vez los errores que uno ha cometido. Todos los hombres cometen errores. Todos los hombres se equivocan. Todos los hombres buscan su perdición por un camino complicado o sencillo. Dibujar la sirena con la mancha de la pared. La pared parece una sirena. Tiene la caballera caída por la espalda. ... Siempre he sido mal dibujante. Tiene una cola corta de pescado pequeño. No es una sirena corriente. Desde aquí, tumbado, la sirena puede mirarme. Estás bien, estás bien. No te puede pasar nada porque tú no has hecho nada. No te puede pasar nada. Se tienen que dar cuenta de que tú no has hecho nada. Está claro que tú no has hecho nada.

¿Por qué tuviste que beber tanto aquella noche? ¿Por qué tuviste que hacerlo borracho, completamente borracho? Está prohibido conducir borracho y tú...tú...No pienses. Estás aquí bien. Todo da igual; aquí estás tranquilo, tranquilo, tranquilizándote poco a poco. Es una aventura. Tu experiencia se amplía. Ahora sabes más que antes. Sabrás mucho más de todo que antes, sabrás lo que han sentido otros, lo que es estar ahí abajo donde tú sabías que había otros y nunca te lo podías imaginar. Tú enriqueces tu experiencia. Llegas a conocer mejor lo que eres, de lo que eres capaz. Si realmente eres un miedoso, si te aterrorizas. Si te pueden. Lo que es el miedo. Lo que el hombre sigue siendo desde detrás del miedo, desde debajo del miedo, al otro lado de la frontera del miedo. Que eres capaz de vivir tranquilo todavía, de estar aquí serenamente. Si estás aquí serenamente no es un fracaso. Triunfas del miedo. El hombre imperturbable, el que sigue siendo imperturbable, entero, puede decir que triunfa, aunque todos, todos, todos crean que está cagado de miedo, que es una piltrafa, un gusarapo. Si guarda su fondo de libertad que le permite elegir lo que le pasa, elegir lo que le está aplastando. Decir: quiero, sí, quiero sí, quiero, quiero, quiero estar aquí porque quiero lo que ocurre, quiero lo que es, quiero de verdad, quiero, sinceramente quiero, está bien así. ¿Qué es lo que pide todo placer? Pide profunda, profunda eternidad.

Tú no la mataste. Estaba muerta. No estaba muerta. Tú la mataste. ¿Por qué dices tú?-Yo. (pp. 175-7)

The underlying subject-matter of this passage is the content of Pedro's psychic consciousness, its form that of his mental process; implied are

the qualities of rhythm and temporality. The rhythm of his thoughts and mood derives from the development of certain motifs. Resignation and patience are the principal elements of his temperament, interwoven with fear and guilt; they develop in a series of fluctuations, acquiring greater dramatic intensity. Pedro assures himself at the outset: "estar aquí quieto el tiempo que sea necesario". "Estar tendido quieto", he repeats, conscious of the insinuating need to "dominar la angustia". Awareness of destructive doubt prompts him to comment "Para qué pensar. No hay más que estar quieto." "Aquí mientras estoy quieto no me pasa nada" he insists. A rhythm of uneasy repetition has by now been established and Pedro realises that "No puedo hacer nada por mí mismo. Tranquilidad. No puedo hacer nada . . ." His desire for patient resignation reasserts itself: "Estar tranquilo en el fondo", but Joyce's "agenbite of inwit" intrusively breaks down his mental defences: "¿Por qué fui?" Next, the previous theme of self-analysis reappears: "No pensar. No hay por que pensar en lo que ya está hecho." He makes the excuse that "todos los hombres cometen errores." His attention then shifts to his physical surroundings, to the "mancha de la pared"; but eventually the inevitable anguish of insecurity returns and he is obliged to tell himself "Estás bien, estás bien. No te puede pasar nada porque tú no has hecho nada." The mobile nature of his train of thought is illustrated by the immediate fall into violent self-recrimination: "¿Por qué tuviste que beber tanto aquella noche? ¿Por qué tuviste que hacerlo borracho, completamente borracho?" This he can only assuage by abstract comment on the general implications of his circumstances: "Es una aventura. Tu experiencia se amplía..." The fourth paragraph closes on a protracted consideration of the Existentialist concept of



freedom, which is only undermined and replaced by the resurgent pangs of guilt: "Tú no la mataste. Estaba muerta. No estaba muerta. Tú la mataste. ¿Por qué dices tú? - Yo." This passage displays the workings of the human mind as bare, unrepressed, fluctuating process and disjointed development and attests the ontological supremacy of consciousness.

A frustrated, acutely self-conscious mind's response to time is likewise portrayed and incorporated in the pessimistic monologue with which the novel closes (pp. 233-240). The following extract is taken from pages 238-9, which depict Pedro's leaving Madrid on the train. The interior monologue is directly presented without the author's intervention; it shows Pedro's private consciousness in its unspoken yet sophisticated state; the flow of thought is continuous and variable. We shall comment pari passu on the structure of this extract of the monologue in order to indicate the mechanics of its rhythm, the agent of temporal progression:

Pero no me siento suficientemente desesperado, siento un placer muelle en este arcaico instrumento que galopa, galopa, galopa como un animal con su traqueteo ruidoso de efecto hipnótico que hace coincidir su ritmo con el del electroencefalograma y que por un sistema de acomodación idéntico al que emplean los negros en las tribus primitivas, con sus tam-tam en las noches de fiestas bailando, bailando consiguen - ellos, sí, dichosos - llegar al famoso éxtasis, mientras que aquí ni aun el sueño se consigue. Si llegara al éxtasis, si cayera al suelo y pateara ante la misma cara del predicador

Initial statement of basic theme.

Circumstantial reference, shift of attention from the exclusive self.

Association of ideas springing from the essential concept of rhythm.

Particular and contrasting awareness of self and context. Continuation of established motif. Hypothesis of associated theme.

viajero podría convertirme, atravesar el lavado necesario del cerebro prevaricador y quedar convertido en un cazador de perdices gordas y aldeanas sumisas.

Pero no somos negros, no somos negros, los negros saltan, ríen, gritan y votan para elegir a sus representantes en la ONU. Nosotros no somos negros, ni indios ni países subdesarrollados. Somos mojamamas tendidas al aire purísimo de la meseta que están colgados de un alambre oxidado, hasta que hagan su pequeño éxtasis silencioso.

Tracatraca-tracatraca-tracatraca-traqueteo tracatraca-tracatraca: se puede formar un ritmo, es cuestión de darle una forma, una estructura gestáltica, puede conseguirse un ritmo distinto según la postura en que uno se ponga a escuchar un ritmo cada dos, un ritmo cada tres, un ritmo cada cuatro y luego repetir, o bien otro ritmo como en las figuras ópticas se puede ver una copa o el perfil de una cara.

Racionalismo mórbido, qué me importan a mí los ritmos, las figuras y las gestalten si me están capando vivo.

¿Y por qué no estoy desesperado? Es cómodo ser eunuco, es tranquilo, estar desprovisto de testículos, es agradable a pesar de estar castrado tomar el aire y el sol mientras uno se amojama en silencio.

¿Por qué desesperarse si uno sigue amojamándose silenciosamente y las rosas siguen sien...las rosas?...

ajjj.

Podrás cazar perdices, podrás cazar perdices muy gordas cuando los sembrados estén ya... podrás jugar al ajedrez en el casino.

A ti siempre te ha gustado el ajedrez, si no has jugado al ajedrez más es porque no has tenido tiempo. Acuérdate que antes sabías la defensa Philidor. El ajedrez es muy agradable y además al no estar desesperado, qué fácil será acostumbrarse si uno está desesperado.

Third and culminating movement of the 'éxtasis' theme.

Attention to the context, i.e. the train.  
Initial idea.  
Expansion of and insistence on theme.

Violent self-awareness and introduction of the metaphorical castration theme.

Reassertion of primary mood & idea.  
Association and expansion on theme.

Forceful return of principal strand, outburst of impatience.

Shift of thought to the future i.e. possible activities in the provinces.

Expansion of chess theme which eventually develops into and fuses with the dominant theme of despair.



The passage lays bare the content and mechanics of Pedro's mind. A principal idea or train of thought (the theme of despair) is established and developed; it is temporarily replaced by associated mental threads (the notions of extasy, rhythm and castration), before reappearing forcefully in conjunction with the idea of chess. The mind is portrayed at work in time.

Stream of consciousness depicts the realities of inner awareness, including the reality of subjective time, since a primordial characteristic of the movement of consciousness is its ability and tendency to find its own time sense. Pedro recognises that experience of time is subjective when he sees the need to "estarse pasando el tiempo" (p. 178). Consciousness may be aware of itself because it is actively existent: Dasein's authenticity is proved by the actuality of "care". So Pedro, in his unadorned condition of "being there", is aware of the painful reality of his existence because of the irrepressible process of consciousness as something that is. His monologues are illustrations of the consciousness of his being and their prime modality is the present tense, the most authentic rendering of Dasein. "El presente de indicativo es el tiempo del solipsismo, de la extrañeza y de la soledad" states Jean Bloch-Michel,<sup>33</sup> a definition which shows the aptness of this tense to Pedro's alienated and isolated being. Roland Barthes perceptively comments that "when the Narrative is rejected in favour of other literary genres, or when, within the narration, the preterite is replaced by less ornamental forms, fresher, more full-blooded and nearer to speech (the present tense or the present perfect), literature becomes the receptacle of existence in all its density and no

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<sup>33</sup>Bloch-Michel, La nueva novela, p. 66.

longer of its meaning alone."<sup>34</sup> The vibrancy and vitality of Pedro's being are conveyed by the use of this tense at crucial moments of his destiny. In the train-scene at the end of the novel he says to himself:

Aquí estoy. No sé para qué pienso. Podía dormirme. Soy risible. Estoy desesperado de no estar desesperado. Pero podría también no estar desesperado a causa de estar desesperado por no estar desesperado. A qué viene aquí ahora ese trabalenguas. Parece como si me gustaría decirlo a alguien. Alguien me tomaría todavía por ingenioso y no tendría que preguntarme de donde viene mi ingenio, porque para qué iba a preguntarme de donde viene mi ingenio. ¿Y qué demonios puede importarle a nadie si yo soy ingenioso o no soy ingenioso o si era ingeniosa la puta que me parió? ¡Imbécil! Otra vez estoy pensando y gozo en pensar como si estuviera orgulloso de que lo que pienso son cosas brillantes...ajj. (p. 240).

Pedro's radical presence in the inhospitable world, his ser-ahí, appears most forcefully in the passages depicting his exposed and actual consciousness.

The facts that the form of Pedro's thoughts is syntactically coherent and that their structure exhibits a sophisticated level of verbalization may illustrate a distinction between Pedro's own and the more spectacular forms of interior monologue, as exemplified in Juan Goytisolo's La reivindicación del Conde Don Julián or Hector Vázquez Azpiri's Fauna. These two authors are portraying, in the novels cited, the workings of a mind confused with drugs or drink, a comparatively uninhibited mind whose realm of activity is nearer the primitive source of the unconscious. The sophisticated form in which Martín Santos has Pedro meditate complies with the private characteristics of his intellect and personality, just as Cartucho's interior monologue (pages 45-8) illustrates, in its idiom and syntax, that character's coarser intellectual fibre.

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<sup>34</sup>Roland Barthes, Writing Degree Zero, p. 38.



To portray the internal workings of the mind with plausible accuracy the author of a piece of stream of consciousness fiction will be required to respect the structural attributes of a private thought-process before it attains verbal expression in an established syntactical form. In the following example Martín Santos has attempted to portray the inner articulations of Pedro's mind and especially his frenzied reaction to Dorita's murder at the brutal hands of the vengeful Cartucho:

No, no, no, no es así. La vida no es así, en la vida no ocurre así. El que la hace no la paga. El que a hierro muere no a hierro mata. El que da primero no da dos veces. Ojo por ojo. Ojo de vidrio para rojo cuévano hueco. Diente por diente. Prótesis de oro y celuloide para el mellado abyecto. La furia de los dioses vengadores. Los envenenados dardos de su ira. No siete sino setenta veces siete. El pecado de la Cava hubo también de ser pagado. Echó el río Tajo el pecho afuera hablando al rey palabras de mane-tecel-fares. Cuidadosamente estudió el llamado Goethe las motivaciones del sacrificio de Ifigenia y habiéndolas perfectamente comprendido, dióse con afán a ponerlas en tragedia. El que la hace la paga. No siempre el que la hace: el que cree que la hizo o aquel de quien fue creído que la había hecho o aquel que consiguió convencer a quienes le rodeaban al envolverse en el negro manto del traidor, pálida faz, amarilla mirada, sonrisa torva. ¿Hombre o lobo? ¿El hombre lobo? ¿El lobo que era hombre durante las noches de luna llena? ¿El lobo feroz cuya boca es cuatro veces más ancha que la de un hombre? ¿El hombre lobo para el hombre? ¿La batida contra las alimañas dañinas que descienden al valle y estragan los rebaños? (pp. 232-3).

Here Pedro's thought process comprises four stages: the statement of the theme, variations on it through mythic and literary analogies, restatement of the initial theme and a second variation comprising the "hombre-lobo" motif. Free association, covering a broad cultural spectrum, and discontinuous rhetorical accumulation, manifest in the syntactic and semantic variation on the primary theme of "el que la hace la paga" together convey the private structure of Pedro's personal consciousness. The lack of verbs suggests the rapid articulations of

his troubled mind; the repetition suggests the obsessive insistence on the theme of vengeance. The passage as a whole emphasises the importance of a detailed correspondence between a literary content and the syntactical form which is required to express it.

In the general framework of Tiempo de silencio's internal structure, the passages of interior monologue are an essential contribution to the creation of an internal time pattern. They illustrate the ontological supremacy of mind, its rhythm and situation in time and portray the basic structures of the psychic process. The primacy of stream of consciousness over biological progression is a symptom of the novelist's concern with the inner realities of mind which have become a fundamental part of the twentieth-century fictional experience. He pays particular attention to existential temporality and relegates historical chronology to a level of minor importance in an effort to portray the essence and rhythm of Being and the very stuff of human existence. The novel's deep-seated rhythmical structures embody the dialectic or Gestalt of Pedro's vital project and the interaction of his subjective, ontological reality with the objective factors of social and human reality. Martín Santos has assimilated and transcended the technical resources of his Spanish predecessors in the present century and has created a novel whose sophisticated structural form is quite proportionate to its thematic complexity.



## CHAPTER III

## The Continuous Present in

Ignacio Aldecoa's

Parte de una historia.

Roy Pascal, in a probing article entitled "Tense and Novel",<sup>1</sup> discusses the function of tense form in fiction. The starting point for his argument is Dr. Käte Hamburger's Die Logik der Dichtung, of which he offers first a synopsis and then a corrective evaluation.<sup>2</sup> The German critic denies the temporal nature and importance of tense, considering its purpose to be bound up primarily with the fictional work's relation to the reader: it is a technical and aesthetic factor connected with the literary notions of fictitiousness, i.e. fiction qua fiction, and dramatic immediacy. Pascal shows the limitations of this bias. He concedes that Dr. Hamburger "is right in discerning that a general aesthetic problem is involved, that of the nature of the fictional experience altogether," but argues that she "has not recognised that their function in fiction [i.e. that of tenses], cannot be judged out of context and that they take their meanings from the context." Consequently the present tense may have a definite "present" temporal implication when used in certain contexts instead of the preterite form of conventional narrative technique.

In June 1967, Ignacio Aldecoa's fourth major novel was published.<sup>3</sup> Entitled Parte de una historia, its primary formal characteristic is the

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<sup>1</sup>Cited above, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>All references are to the Noguer edition of Parte de una historia, (Madrid & Barcelona, 1967).

use throughout of the present tense. This can be regarded as a structural representation of the main character's psychology, which, as we shall attempt to demonstrate at a later stage in this chapter, concentrates on and functions in his present, actual circumstances. As a result, the temporal situation of the action is a continuous present. In his scholarly Time and the Novel, Professor A.A. Mendilow dedicates an entire chapter, "Duration and the Continuous Present", to explaining the temporal implications of this particular tense.<sup>4</sup> His point of view is therefore opposed to Dr. Hamburger's and concordant with Pascal's. It is in alignment with Professor Mendilow's conception of tense and form that we propose to approach Aldecoa's Parte de una historia with the presuppositions that (i) tense is necessarily temporal in that novel and that (ii) it is the organic counterpart of the subject-matter. The novel's central theme is the fluctuation and insecurity of life, with special reference to its temporal dimension: a continuous present.

The evaluation of time as a present continuum has certain metaphysical implications which illustrate in detail the general considerations already outlined in the introduction of this thesis. The reduction of temporal perspective to a contracted, concentrated present is generally accepted as symptomatic of contemporary sensibility. Hans Meyerhoff suggests that "the temporal perspective in the lives of individuals has become so foreshortened in our age as to condemn them to live in a perpetual present."<sup>5</sup> For Bergson this present is indeed perpetual and a process of continuous fluctuation; Borges in fact, accepts only the present as real; other thinkers like Wyndham Lewis deny the

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<sup>4</sup>Mendilow, Time and the Novel, pp. 213-20.

<sup>5</sup>Meyerhoff, Time in Literature, pp. 109-10.



element of temporal duration and continuity and view the present as composed of separate, static fragments. All these writers, however, agree on the essential point, the supremacy of the present. Critics of contemporary culture reach similar conclusions. Heller discusses culture in terms of immanence and transcendence, describing in detail the lack of metaphysical certainties or transcendental ideals which is the outstanding characteristic of contemporary Western civilisation. Modern man's philosophico-spiritual dilemma is "how to cast eternity from the new mould of absolute transience, and how to achieve the mode of transcendence within the consciousness of pure immanence."<sup>6</sup> Heller's conception of contemporary man's "marginal situation...in the border-districts of immanence" is supported by Frank Kermode's conclusions about our age's temporal perspective. Kermode attests the presence of apocalyptic thinking in some twentieth-century writers and thinkers, and suggests that "although for us the End has perhaps lost its naive imminence...we may speak of it as immanent";<sup>7</sup> we have no prospective "sense of an ending", no positive, absolute ideal. This is echoed by George Steiner's grim recognition of the spiritual fact that "we have lost a characteristic élan, a metaphysic and technique of 'forward dreaming'."<sup>8</sup>

From these statements one may deduce a view of twentieth-century man, situated in a perpetually precarious and aimless present in the midst of a flux of futile transience. This conception of modern man is a natural continuation of nineteenth century thought, and may be traced to two Western philosophers in particular whose influence on the

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<sup>6</sup>Heller, The Disinherited Mind (Penguin, 1961), p. 144.

<sup>7</sup>Kermode, The Sense of an Ending, p. 6.

<sup>8</sup>Steiner, In Bluebeard's Castle, pp. 58-9.

contemporary Weltanschauung is indisputable: Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. For Schopenhauer, "the vanity of existence is revealed in the whole form existence assumes: in the infiniteness of time and space contrasted with the finiteness of the individual in both; in the fleeting present as the sole form in which actuality exists;...in continual becoming without being..." His considerations of life and time involve an insistence on the actual present. He adds that "our existence has no foundation on which to rest except the transient present," and reduces life to "a succession of transient present moments".<sup>9</sup> But, since "the present is regarded as something quite temporary and serving only as the road to our goal," it follows that no end can be attained: to live ad interim is to live a perpetual means, a "continual becoming". The same lack of purpose is expressed by Nietzsche, whom George Steiner quotes and translates in his study: "Are we not wandering lost as through an unending void?...Are we falling continuously?"<sup>10</sup> The vocabulary and grammar are significant. Nietzsche's use of the present tense and words like "unending" and "continuously" implies a notion of incessant, purposeless movement comparable with Schopenhauer's theory of "continual becoming" and Bergson's "perpetual becoming".<sup>11</sup> The idea of a continuous present is firmly established in contemporary Western thought.

If "the present is the locus of reality"<sup>12</sup> and contemporary man

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<sup>9</sup>Schopenhauer, Essays and Aphorisms, pp. 51-3.

<sup>10</sup>Nietzsche, La Gaia Scienza, in Steiner's work, cited.

<sup>11</sup>Bergson's "le perpetuel devenir", Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience (édition du centenaire, Presses Universitaires de France), p. 120.

<sup>12</sup>Mead, G.H., The Philosophy of the Present (Chicago, 1932), chapter 1, p. 9.



experiences it in an intensified form, the effect may be to infuse in those who experience it a confirmed "sense of the transience of all forms of life".<sup>13</sup> In this transience Mead perceives an element of continuity, receiving the impression of a series of "presents sliding into one another". Professor Mendilow replaces Mead's metaphor of a sliding process with that of the flux. Speed, the keynote of modern existence, implies change for him: "out of the flux that has superseded the comparative fixity of the past new forms rapidly crystallise, only to dissolve once more into the flow of things." The metaphors are Bergsonian, and we here give prominence to this interpretation of time because there are certain features of the temporal dimension of Aldecoa's novel, Parte de una historia, which are markedly Bergsonian in character and which reflect the theories mentioned above on the significance of the present: its intensity, duration, transience and purpose.<sup>14</sup>

We may now proceed to a study of the human situation portrayed in the novel, focussing our attention primarily on the two themes of existential disorientation and temporality.

Parte de una historia is a story about human insecurity. Throughout the novel the main character remains anonymous and surrounded by an air of recognizable but impenetrable mystery fostered by Aldecoa's deliberate technique of understatement and allusion. He appears as a

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<sup>13</sup>Mendilow, Time and the Novel, p. 6.

<sup>14</sup>The negation of the past's connection with the present (see pages 64, 102 and 135) is contrary to Bergson's idea of duration, but the principle of temporal flux derives from him. It is not our contention that there is complete similarity between Aldecoa's and Bergson's conceptions of time.

vulnerable, enigmatic person with a weight on his conscience and a secret to hide. This air of inscrutability is reinforced by the narrator's affirmation that "nadie puede entender el fondo de un hombre" (p. 104).

The novel begins in medias res, on an immediate note of actuality. With no explanation as to the identity of the first person narrator or to how his past is relevant to the island, the reader is presented with a concrete human being in a defined set of circumstances: "Ayer, a la caída de la tarde, cuando el gran acantilado es de cinabrio, he vuelto a la isla" (p. 7). The next page of text illustrates the protagonist's familiarity with certain of the island's features, and he expressly states: "he reconocido todo y todo me ha sido familiar después de cuatro años largos, así que he saludado a los amigos como siempre, como si no me hubiera ido..." (p. 7). The explanation of his absence will never be disclosed, but there is something mysterious, uneasy and, in fact, suspicious about his return. It produces a number of reactions in the interested islanders: "Sabén que estaré solamente una temporada entre ellos, y los ojos de Luisita me interrogan desde su amarga lejanía: ¿Por qué has venido? ¿A qué has venido donde nada hay? ¿Qué buscas?" (p. 10). The main character soon intimates to Roque, a bartender and his host, that it is "a long story": "Después de cenar es cuando Roque decide hacerme la pregunta para la que he esperado calmosamente. No quiere sorprenderme, sino formulármela como si fuera una banalidad de la conversación. La pregunta, tarde o temprano, me la harán todos los amigos, como ya me la ha hecho con su mirada Lucita. - ¿Qué te trae por aca esta vez?

...

- Ya te explicaré, Es largo- le he contestado" (p. 13).



The primary characteristic of the protagonist's temperament is a feeling of insecurity and vital disorientation. Roque notices his nervous disposition: "No estás bien, cristiano..." The main character has to admit to himself that "no estoy bien. Roque tiene razón" (p. 14). Although no explanations have been offered as to the explicit nature of his discomfort or indisposition, it soon becomes clear that it is not merely a question of health or personal happiness. On the evening of his third day on the island, the main character analyses his actual circumstances: "Estoy otra vez en la isla y de huida. ¿De quién huyo? ¿No sabría decírmelo. Todo es demasiado vago. ¿Tengo alguna razón? ¿Por qué y de qué? No, no sabría decírmelo. ¿Y estoy aquí porque es aquí donde puedo encontrar algo? No sabría decírmelo. Huir acaso explica la huida" (p. 35). The problem is abstract but the nature of his disorientation becomes more recognizable. He is rootless, vulnerable and a fugitive from something which is ineluctably real but rationally indefinible. He asks himself what is this insubstantial menace from which he feels compelled to flee, but three times he has to admit that "no sabría decírmelo." The question "¿Tengo alguna razón?" poses the same problem and receives the same answer. The protagonist is a fugitive from an absurd threat, a vague, Kafkaesque pressure, perhaps a modern equivalent of the Greek hounds of fate. The world for him, embodies no beneficial principle of accommodating Reason. Like don Pedro in Luis Martín Santos' Tiempo de silencio, he is an example of human existential alienation, haunted by a feeling of incompatibility with his surroundings and a prey to the human dilemma of seeking a purpose in a medium which itself affords none. His life is an escape, a perpetual means with no tangible end: "huir acaso explica la huida."

The island is a suitable harbour of protection, for "todos mis riesgos están fuera de esta isla, y aquí en este regazo es donde se desencadenan otros riesgos que no me alcanzan" (p. 42). The islanders' hard-working, rude, natural life-style provides him with admirable material for distraction: "Entro en las preocupaciones de la isla, me deshago un poco de mí mismo pensando en las posibilidades de mañana, participo de la inquietud despertada por el riesgo de los que están en la mar..." (p. 45). The main character sorely needs a common cause with which to identify, acutely aware, as he is, of his social prominence on the island. Ultimately an isolated individual - (the novel is presented from the singular point of view of a first person narrator) - he is, as it were, intruding in a small pastoral community. On the first night of his return to the island, the main character mentions that he has come from a city environment and that he is now confronted with the need to adapt to a change in circumstance. Roque underlines the fact as he suggests that it is time for all his customers to retire for the night, "pero es muy pronto para un hombre que vive en la ciudad, acostumbrado a la noche" (p. 15). The protagonist is a fugitive from city-life and an illustration of the alienation implied in that artificial style of existence. "Today almost everyone living in the urbanized centres of the Western World feels intuitively a lack of something in life," writes S.H. Nasr.<sup>15</sup> At times, the narrator in Parte de una historia achieves identification with the island's environment. On the morning of his trip with Roque to the Isla Mayor he finds an irresistible charm and attraction in the dawning of a new

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<sup>15</sup>S.H. Nasr, The Encounter of Man and Nature (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1968), p. 17.



day: "estos minutos crepusculares... reconcilian los sentidos - a veces hirvientes, a veces desmayados en esta latitud - con la naturaleza" (p. 115). But he is ultimately alienated from these contented folk and their surroundings. The root of this alienation is a psychological fear. What he fears is the terrible spectre of solitude, not the physical isolation of, for example, the shepherd-girl he sees the day after his arrival at the island, but the spiritual destitution of the individual with no cause or ideal. The shepherdess' condition "no es una soledad. La soledad es de los insolidarios, de los de abatido corazón" (p. 24). The solitude which he finds so abhorrent is a condition of the soul. The afternoon following the shameful drinking bout which he is desperate to forget, the protagonist is subject to an irrational feeling of moral confusion: "Y yo siento un extraño vacío dentro de mí, como si - no hay razón alguna para confirmarlo - la soledad temida de otras veces ya me hubiese empapado y se hubiera evaporado muy repentinamente" (p. 104). Collapse of moral conscience, spiritual emptiness and solitude are all of a piece for him. The concept of a spiritual void in fact appears consistently throughout the novel. The narrator describes a disheartening attempt at reading which ends in uneasy distraction: "es la desazonante hora en que si tomo un libro me pierdo en cada página, como si leer fuera algo enigmático y mis incapaces ojos patinaran por las palabras sin lograr aprehenderlas. La lectura no entendida, sin transcurrir como la eternidad, y una sensación de flotar en el vacío, me agobian y disminuyen" (p. 163).<sup>16</sup>

In addition to diverting the narrator's attention from his inner problems, the island also offers him the peace and quiet in which to analyse

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<sup>16</sup>See pages 35, 45, 104, 129 & 163 for references to "el vacío".

himself with a measure of detachment. The day after the American's ship-wreck, the protagonist is standing on his own in the sand-dunes considering his situation: "Ahora rememoro, encontrando una suerte de compasión gozosa, todo lo que ha sido encastillado desastre y orgulloso cansancio de mí mismo. ...Ahora rememoro, estando a muchas millas de mar, a muchos kilómetros de mi tierra, la ciudad de desasosiego que he abandonado. Aquí, en esta isla y en esta mañana brumosa, comienzo a comprenderme distanciado de la imagen que tengo de mí, allá, lejos, como en una historia sucedida a otro." The island's simple, close-knit community is a thoroughly beneficial environment for this disturbed exile from the city.

The second paragraph of this chapter indicates how fundamental the experience of time is to his spiritual malaise: "Apacible, enmismado, siento transcurrir años náufragos, meses delirantes, semanas llenas de gemas empolvadas, días de estiércol y aun horas, minutos, segundos, milésimas de segundos o simples fulguraciones de mi vida, que no sé si alcanzan a ser contadas en tiempo. Pero en todo solamente hay amargura e insolidaridad" (p. 64). His conscience and awareness of the past are major elements of his psychology and he is profoundly disturbed by time. While taking a siesta one afternoon, he finds his memory awakening, a probable consequence of his inactivity and greater mental detachment: "Acumulo extraños datos..., instauro objetos significativos, que me abruman con su permanencia en el tiempo, y no logro armonizar esta desmayada realidad con el emanante recuerdo que, turbio y cálido, me anega. Busco, durante extensos minutos de fuga y rememoración, lo que este ámbito y esta hora tienen de sutil vínculo con el pasado y me fatigo y nada encuentro. Pero alguna chispita o lucecilla delirante



debió de encenderse en un momento para que yo iniciara mi viaje a la memoria y que ésta me transmitiera la sensación de estar lejos de aquí y de mí y en otro día" (pp. 134-5). On another occasion, when "los ingleses" are inquiring about a sea-storm, the English woman's physiognomy has a strange power of suggestion and an appealing fascination for the main character: "Todo lo que transcurre en la mirada de ella está fluyendo a lo remoto. Todo lo que dice esa mirada es de no estar aquí, en esta isla, sino en la desolación del horizonte.... Ha habido como una emigración a lo pasado y ya estoy otra vez en el presente" (p. 43). But for his conscious mind, the past stands in negative relation to the present and separated from it. It is the past from which he is fleeing. So, "aquí, en esta isla...comienzo a comprenderme distanciado de la imagen que tengo de mí allá lejos, como en una historia sucedida a otro" (p. 64). It is also the past which uncomfortably stirs his conscience. On the morning after his drunken night he claims "no quiero acordarme de lo que pasó anoche, porque si no me acuerdo no ha existido ni existirá para desasosegarme y envilecerme.... Pero la memoria más profunda e incontrolable irá reconstruyendo pieza por pieza el rompecabezas y temo que a medida que mi turbación pase y lucidez sea mayor mi penitencia crezca.... ¿Será el acicate de mi memoria, obrará de conciencia aun a su pesar? Bien, no ha sido otra cosa que un exceso, no cometido desde hace algún tiempo, pero siempre temido y capaz de renovar vergüenzas retrospectivas" (pp. 102-3). Haunted by feeling of guilt, he is concerned only with shunning the tell-tale past, and consequently takes refuge in the present. On this occasion he turns his attention to something involving many of the islanders: "algo está sucediendo allí en la playa de las Conchas, junto

al derrelicto del yate; algo que quiero vivir, en lo que necesito estar presente" (p. 103).

The object of his concern is significant, for the novel's central image is that of a ship-wreck. The major events of the action are the arrival of a number of drunken Americans when their boat is wrecked on the island's coast-line, and the death by drowning of one of their party, Jerry. Boats figure prominently, too, in the islanders' life-style, for they depend on them for their livelihood. In the novel, the image of a boat is consistently endowed with symbolic significance. The protagonist draws an early parallel between himself and a boat, the first example of this symbolism: "estoy aquí junto a esta barca, humedeciendo las manos en la arena. Estoy otra vez en la isla y de huida...Y estoy aquí junto a esta barca, solo en la noche. ¿Y estoy como esta barca, rumbo al vacío y para siempre?" (p. 35). Human disorientation is consistently expressed in these symbolic terms. The main character sees himself as a ship-wrecked sailor: excluded on one occasion from a conversation, he states that "estoy lejos en mi propio naufragio siendo una presencia ajena" (p. 41). El señor Mateo comments on the "chonis'" vital aimlessness and implicitly contrasts it with the islanders' honest, purposeful existence. "Los ricos como estos," he says, "no saben donde van. Son todos náufragos" (p. 202). The narrator and the "chonis", as "náufragos", are the direct antithesis of the well-integrated and secure islanders whose land and community represent safety and equilibrium. The ship-wrecked narrator is attracted to the island and its people but is also intrigued by his fellow "náufragos", for he can readily identify with them. He is interested in Jerry precisely because "ha naufragado - éste es el momento



cuspidal de su existencia para mí" (p. 72). This is something that has metaphorical, not only symbolical, significance for the narrator, who continues thus: "Aunque (Jerry) hubiera corrido todos los temporales del mundo - del que no excluyo el gran temporal de la guerra, a manera de metáfora - el que me preocupa es éste, el que yo he vivido desde la isla y él en peligro, debido al azar ...que lo ha hecho llegar al igual que a mí - otro temporal, también a modo de metáfora -..." (p. 72). The main character comments explicitly also on the symbolic meaning of the "chonis" wreck: "Cuando me distraigo veo a tres de los americanos y a las gentes del pueblo pulular en torno al derrelicto del yate, y desde la duna de la fardela divido dos mundos: uno a mis espaldas, el del pueblo, y otro frente a mí, el del barco. Estas dos consecuencias no son únicamente imágenes proyectadas de lo organizado, firme, vital, y de lo desorganizado, anárquico y mortuorio, sino símbolos contrapuestos y enemigos, entre los que está mi debate" (pp. 64-5). The ruin and apathy of his life is represented by the wreck of a ship, just as the purposeful wholeness of the islanders' is represented by the island itself. One afternoon, while gazing out of one of Roque's windows, the protagonist catches sight of a battered but still sea-worthy boat, the "Chipirrin", "caído de estribor y derrotado". Roque confides that "ese barco es muy duro y aguanta marea y lo que mande Dios." The protagonist identifies himself with the boat: "la contemplación del "Chipirrin" me conmueve...Como el "Chipirrin" caído, pero capaz de navegar mañana; como el "Chipirrin" hociendo en la entraña arenosa del vacío, pero capaz de navegar mañana; como el barquillo familiar, isleño, ignorado del mundo, deseo levantar mi corazón y navegar mañana" (pp. 44-5). This analogy illustrates a second thematic implication: the protagonist's

situation in time and his awareness of his own temporality. It shows him looking forward to the future with an ambitious sense of purpose, although this or any other note of foresight is never struck again in the novel, except for the reluctant anticipation of the closing paragraph. The "Chipirrin" - comparison describes his present confusion and aimlessness, commenting specifically on his life as tending towards the void. The most powerful and explicit portrayal of his experience of time is afforded by an earlier comparison: "¿Y estoy como esta barca, rumbo al vacío y para siempre?" (p. 35). The central ideas are of movement, lack of direction and perpetual presentness. The boat's situation in time is precarious, pointless and unremitting, for it floats in the midst of a flux of unceasing, aimless transience.

The contrast between the 'ship-wrecked' narrator and the islanders is especially marked in relation to their experience of time. The urban experience of time as a quantitative, disruptive process has contributed to the narrator's alienation. In contrast with this negative experience, rural or pastoral existence appears to offer a positive perspective, for man can here identify with nature's process and qualitative temporal infinity. In Parte de una historia, time for the islanders is multi-dimensional. On a personal level, they live in the present of human activity and behaviour, occupied with their daily work, observations and leisure pursuits. But insistence on the present does not imply a rejection of the past for the islanders: they are aware of it and many of them, especially the older ones, recall past events of their lives and the island's history with a sense of nostalgia and fond self-identification. "El señor Mateo," for example, "tiene una pátina de años de trabajo... Pero la voz del señor Mateo desafía a los desastres del tiempo y todavía



ayer está en su timbre, cuando recuerda las andanzas, simples, duras, encantadoras del pasado" (p. 92). Roque is prone to telling "historias relacionadas con el mar...", sometimes of war-time events like that of the submarine which "pasó por el río de mar una noche de luna llena ... por el año cuarenta y uno o cuarenta y dos" (p. 195).

In addition to their recognition of a personal past which links them together via a sense of collective history, the islanders experience a meta-historical dimension of time. This is a form of temporality which transcends the limits of human consciousness or calendar awareness and which derives from the island's situation in a natural environment. Human experience is here inextricable from, and subordinate to, the universal scheme of nature, as Unamuno similarly suggested in his quasi-mystical conception of intrahistoric reality. In Parte de una historia the overpowering force of nature is the sea. The island is a hermetic community whose welfare depends on the effective integration and participation of all in a true Gemeinschaft. Man's livelihood and survival depend on his successful mastering of his environment. The sea governs and organizes the islanders' existence, their work, their roles, and indeed their overall social structure. Life depends on work, and work on the sea, for "esta isla es una isla de trabajo" (p. 36). The sailor's life is that of "el hombre midiéndose a muerte con la naturaleza" (p. 40), a theme expressed on a grand fictional scale in Gran Sol, Aldecoa's third novel. Work is thus organized according to natural conditions, in contrast with urban regulations of labour by the clock and man-determined, rationalised chronology. On the island, the individual is subordinate to the community, which is in turn subordinate to nature's eternal process. Man's communion with the external

natural forces is through "la cotidiana aventura de la pesca" (p. 105), a simple activity enclosing an unspoken ethic of almost religious proportions. The islanders' experience of time is beyond purely human or historical limits. Aldecoa's emphasis on the routine nature of their work suggests that they participate in nature's eternal presentness. The sea, and by extension, nature, is an infinite reality, the source and destination of everything. It includes past events, conserving them as if perpetually present: "no está la mar calmada, todavía resta en ella el recuerdo de lo pasado" (p. 201). "La mar siempre está ahí, y las aves de paso, pasan" (p. 112), and "Mañana, pasado y al otro y hasta el fin, espera la mar" (p. 164). In the midst of nature's plenitude, chronological time, the narrator's burden, is irrelevant and is replaced by fluid temporality. The shepherd-girl, like Wordsworth's leech-gatherer, lives "desparramando los días de mano a mano en puñados de arena por el breve desierto de esta isla, caligrafiando con su varilla las horas muertas del pasturaje, entreviendo los reflejos de las aguas y las casas, que consuelan el aburrimiento" (p. 24). Strict chronology is a property of urban life. The island is situated in the distant Atlantic, "el último rincón del mundo" (p. 21). Time exists but only as an abstract experiential quality which defies quantitative analysis: "el tiempo es muy difícil de contar en esta isla" (p. 9).

Experience of a natural eternal present has two advantageous implications. First, the future is no longer the centre of attention that it tends to become in the city, nor is it a source of human anxiety. The future is inherent in Nature's process and no longer a nightmare. The islanders exhibit no fear of death, but accept it



with a matter-of-fact serenity. Enedina, hard-working and practical, has a simple conception of her role in life: "es de carne, de leche maternal, de aromas femeninos, de cobijo, olor de pucheros a la lumbre, ropas blancas puestas a tender, lágrimas, ocupaciones constantes y espera de la vejez." She has given birth to four children: "es su entrega al mundo y es su satisfacción. Está preparada para vivir unos pocos años más y darse resignadamente a la muerte. Lo que tenía que hacer está hecho" (p. 43-4). On one occasion, the narrator rather sensationally suggests that sharks may come and attack the camel that Roque is taking to a neighbouring island, tied alongside his boat. Roque replies: "-También la muerte. - También la muerte, Roque. -Pues tranquilo" (p. 123). The islander is unperturbed by the problems of death and the finiteness of human individual life.

Second, the past is part and parcel of eternity and may still be experienced in the present through the repeated practice of traditional customs, ceremonies and rites. For example, the arrival of a catch of fish at the harbour is accompanied by a traditional unconscious ceremony which is in no way theatrical but which conforms to a simple pattern of communal behaviour: "Cuando todos están aquí, formando un coro primero y luego una multitud, entregados a los ritos del regreso: detallando la pesca, calculando las ganancias...; cuando el verbo, por exceso, se precipita en ruido, y sólo los bruscos ademanes, las gesticulaciones vacías y una tensión obscena... se manifiestan, los viejos se van" (p. 23). The existence of an all-inclusive temporal realm of nature which allows for communion with ancient yet eternally present forces is attested by the use of adjectives such as "primitivo" (pp. 33 & 108), "elemental" (p. 49), "cósmico" (p. 71), "milenario" (p. 83),

"mítica" (p. 193), "cotidiano" (pp. 96 & 105) and "ceremonial" (p. 199) describing the island and defining the islanders' activities.

The islanders thus experience both a personal-historical and a collective meta-historical dimension of time. They live, on a simple personal level, in a continuous present with an awareness and acceptance of the past, but also collectively and unconsciously in the eternal, past-inclusive present of nature. The narrator's response is a striking contrast, due to his having been conditioned by life in the city. The islanders' stable modus vivendi implies a stable relationship with time. The narrator's existential instability is reflected in his experience of time as a precarious, aimless, continuous present from which he struggles to exclude the past and refuses to challenge or face up to "that blind chancy darkness which we call the future".<sup>17</sup>

Temporality and human existential futility, then, are two principal themes of Aldecoa's Parte de una historia. For the main character they are two sides of one and the same coin. He concentrates on the present day - a living enterprise -, shuns his past and postpones his future obligations. Life is a fluid process for him, a continuous present and perpetual becoming. Yet it is a negative, or at least neutral, process since it is a becoming-~~nothing~~, for, as Schopenhauer reminds us, "the present is regarded as something quite temporary and serving only as the road to our goal."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>William Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom! (Penguin, 1971), p. 261.

<sup>18</sup>Schopenhauer, op. cit., p. 53.



The main character's life-style and his implicit experience of time are reflected in the novel's structure. The form of Parte de una historia is singularly coherent, continuous and distinctive in its temporal aspect. The narrative is linear and endowed with a quality of dynamic continuity since the first-person narrator is also the principle character, though he stands more as a spectator than as a protagonist of the action. The technique of presentation reduces the narrator-protagonist's experience of events and time to a continuous presentness: apart from a limited number of imperfect verb forms, the tense is exclusively present.<sup>19</sup> Unamuno and Miró, among others, had already employed the present tense to indicate specifically temporal factors of psychology and action in parts of the text of certain novels (cf. the analyses of Paz en la guerra and La novela de mi amigo). Aldecoa's achievement lies in the creation of an organic and coherent chronomorph through the use of one sole principle of structure dependent on the protagonist's real experience. There is a point of interest also in the narrative technique adopted here, for 'yo', as both protagonist and narrator, plays and fulfils a double structural role. He is responsible for accounting, via the novel's narrative structure, for the forms of reality to which he is a witness. There is, in fact, an inevitable element of artificiality in his use of the present tense: he clearly cannot give a written account of events while they are happening. Logically the time of writing comes after the events proper, but the narrator rejects this logical necessity in order to convey an impression of immediacy and actuality in a structure which may correspond to the

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<sup>19</sup>The perfect tense is also used, but it is a tense based on the present and part of the primary sequence.

continuously transient form of cosmic reality and human experience.

The present is "the locus of reality"<sup>20</sup> and for the protagonist the recognizable content of human perception and sensation. Actual circumstance and experience are the basic materials of the action, to the exclusion of flash-backs or retrospective, scene - setting explanations and descriptions. The story is hermetic, dissociated from any past or future action and confined to the island. It has the air of an interlude or parenthesis, a characteristic of the lives of the people portrayed in the novel. Of Beatrice the narrator wonders "¿Viajará a la Isla Mayor, o ésta - digo nuestra isla - será suficiente para llenar el paréntesis de inacción que se le depara?" (p. 76). Jerry is described as "regresado de la muerte en el naufragio, recluso en un corto espacio, en un tiempo medido, y regresando a la muerte" (p. 183). Similarly, the continuous present is a ceaseless means to no end, a perpetual parenthesis. The main character's experience on the island is ad interim, the story beginning with his assuming a specious mental present: "ayer... he vuelto a la isla" (p. 7), and closing on an identical psychological note: "mañana ... dejaré la isla" (p. 219).

Between these two events is set the narrator's experience of life on the island over a period of some fifteen days or more. Up to chapter 20, the passing of days is accounted for precisely, but the final three chapters refer vaguely to "unos días de calma" (p. 212), for example, or to a similarly imprecise period. At the outset of the story the narrator states that "estaré solamente una temporada" (p. 10) with the islanders. His experience during this "temporada" is presented as a stream-like, fluctuating process and Bergsonian duration in a

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<sup>20</sup>Mead, The Philosophy of the Present, chapter 1.



continuous present. The events of the action are introduced as transient episodes of a successive series. In chapter 5 the islanders rescue four drunken Americans from their boat "Bloody Mary" which has run aground on the rocky beach. The next day is another context in time, another present, when "casi son recuerdos los peligros del día anterior, a los que se refiere como a un gran cansancio" (p. 60). Transience and a sense of continuity are the essence of life on the island. Time is an abstract quality, totally lacking in quantitative rigidity: it is a general sense. The fluctuating present is the supreme context of experience and reality, with only a "sutil vínculo con el pasado" (p. 135). The virtually exclusive use of the present tense accounts for both the narrator's and the islanders' experience.

The present tense form can be employed ambiguously.<sup>21</sup> It may be a static, generalising and descriptive form: "Coincidió a la hora del desayuno, alegre y temprano, con los ingleses y americanos en el gran comedor de la casa de Roque. La comida del mediodía y la cena las hago en la clausura familiar..." (p. 71). Alternatively it may be a dynamic, active and actualising form, implying actuality, transience and continuity; this is the subject of Professor Mendilow's chapter "Duration and the Continuous Present" (*op. cit.*). The following examples of a sequence of present tense verb forms illustrate their inherent quality of succession and motion, and the impression of a series of events in their very process of development. On carnival day the protagonist leaves Enedina's house and makes his way to Roque's shop. Outside, "mis ojos se van haciendo a la luminosidad del mediodía. Descubro a

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<sup>21</sup>It is partly for this reason that Dr. Hamburger classifies the present tense as unsuitable for narrative purposes. See Pascal, *op. cit.*

las gaviotas aneándose en el vaivén del mar. Una levanta el vuelo atropelladamente, gira en torno de la bandada en reposo y, agitando las alas, estirando electrizada las patas, toma de nuevo contacto con las aguas" (p. 154). The sense of continuity is enhanced by the sustained use of present participles. At the end of the novel, nightfall is described as an actual process, with verb forms in the present tense: "Me echo sobre la cama. Montaña Amarilla, las playas, Las Conchas del naufragio, el acantilado, van desapareciendo de mis ojos y sólo siento como va atardeciendo y anochece y ya es de noche y en la ventana todo es negro" (p. 218). Significantly, the passage of prose describing night's falling is fluid, continuous, linked by three conjunctions, "y", and uninterrupted by commas.

It is this experience of continuous presentness which constitutes the general experience of time. A sense of time is deduced from the transience of events or phenomena and expressed in the novel as a consequence of the narrator's being present at, responding to and living through those events as the protagonist of the action; it is inseparable from the rhythm of his experience. The novel contains two inherent rhythmical patterns. The author depicts the infinite and perpetual process of nature which manifests itself through the variation of the elements and the alternation between day and night, light and darkness. An illustration of this natural rhythmical pattern is afforded by the narrator's description of "el rayo del sol que flecha por la contraventana.... Ondas, nubes, multitud. Creación y descreación de formas en un calidoscopio enloquecido. Contemplantarlo es acercarse al caos. Variación permanente, metamorfosis infinita, continua construcción destruida" (p. 37). The division of the novel into 22 chapters - generally



the beginning of a new chapter signifies the beginning of a new day - is counteracted by the impression of nature's underlying vital continuity. Temporal experience is related to the natural context, and especially to the sea which, like the sunlight and the day-night routine, is part of a vast, natural process.

It is with this process that the narrator aspires to identify and this reality which he presents via the novel's narrative structure. Chapter 3 for example documents the events of his third day on the island: "es mi tercer día en la isla y está atardeciendo. El sol de invierno tiene caída rápida y a las cinco se enfriará la solana" (p. 27); "las sombras de luna vibran y lo iluminado está yerto" and "el viento tiende a aumentar" (pp.35-6). The following, fourth, chapter relates to the next day; the reference is only implicit since the new day is a new present and a new basis of experience. Whereas a third-person narrator might use an expression like 'the following morning' or 'the day after', with an implied sense of detachment, the first-person narrator is inseparably involved with the experience of the action: he relates that which is, here and now. The connection between that which is, today, and that which was or has been, yesterday, resides in the variation of the natural elements between the two situations. The third chapter ends: "el viento tiende a aumentar", and the fourth begins: "el viento ha rolado esta noche al este." The arrival of a new day is indicated by "el rayo del sol que flecha por la contraventana" (p. 37). Nature's interminable cycle is the novel's rhythmic constant, overriding human behaviour, experience and catastrophe. At the end of chapter 17, Jerry is drowned, yet the worst of human tragedies can do nothing to stop the world's incessant natural process, its "perpetual

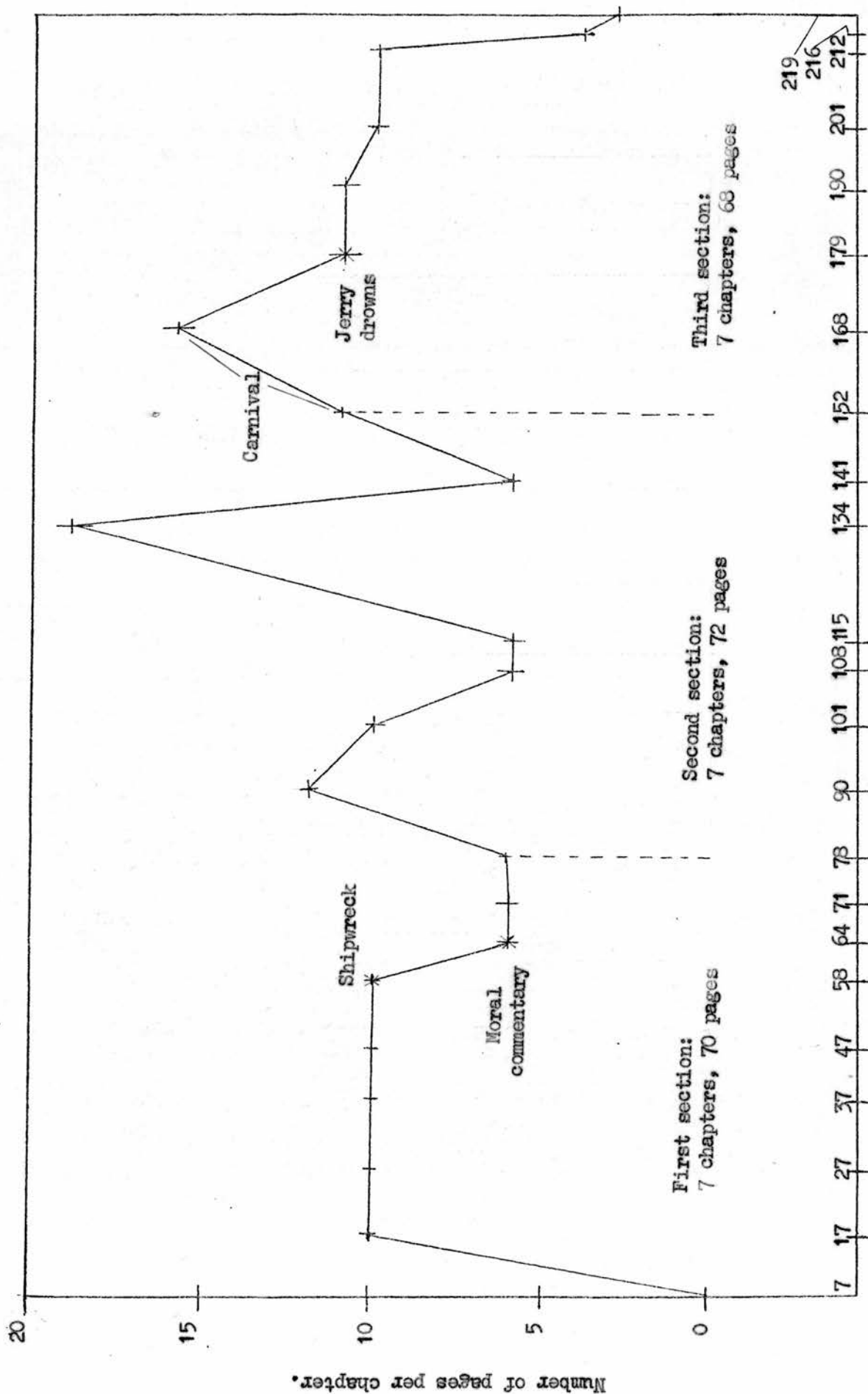
becoming".<sup>22</sup> Next morning, at the beginning of chapter 18, "el cielo está cubierto de nubes...y sopla viento del nordeste. El río de mar arbola ...y...brillan las rocas platinadas por una luz que se filtra pereciente." As in Miró's La novela de mi amigo (see the appendix below), human fate and life seem insignificant in comparison with an absolute, universal principle of nature.

Yet they are the basis of the novel's second rhythmical pattern. Life on the island acquires a structure and rhythm in accordance with the events of human significance which occur there. This is the variation or oscillation in human fortune (cf. "el latido de su vida" (p. 30)), mirrored in some of the islanders' opinion of the drowning: "Ayer, tanta alegría, y hoy, lutos. Así es la vida" (p. 181). The relative importance of certain chapters, gauged by their quota of significant human detail in terms of events and action, is a major factor in the book's formal arrangement; the accompanying graph attempts to illustrate this. There is in Parte de una historia a consistent pattern of chapters either ten and eleven, or seven pages in length and allocated in homogeneous blocks throughout the text; of the book's twenty-two chapters, twelve are ten or eleven pages long and six are seven pages in length. The short chapters tend to include passages of commentary, self-analysis and critical monologue and to be generally static in nature. Chapter 8, for example, contains no dialogue whatsoever, nor does it portray any action. The longer chapters deal more with externals - events -, for example chapters 13 and 16, and comprise passages of descriptive or dynamic narrative and dialogue. Some

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<sup>22</sup>Bergson, Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience, p. 120.





passages of critical commentary do appear in long chapters<sup>23</sup>, likewise action is not their exclusive prerogative but, by and large, a generally consistent pattern does exist. A variation of tempo is thus established, furthering the impression of transience; continuity is, however, assured by the very form of this variation which is a pattern of consistent alternation.

Continuity is provided also by the balance in the novel's underlying sectional structure. The narrative may be divided into three symmetrical sections, with junctures between chapters 8 and 9, and 15 and 16; the final section may be considered as comprising two parts, chapters 16 to 20 and a coda-like final pair. The first section, seventy pages in length, comprises five long chapters of events, culminating in the first climax: the wrecking of the American boat, and three short chapters of commentary and self-analysis by the narrator. A rhythmical build-up is established, consolidated and realised in a dramatic event. After the ship-wreck the tempo falls, logically, to reflect the static aftermath and to allow the narrator-protagonist to draw his moral, didactic conclusions. The second section, 72 pages in length, contains no drama at all: two long chapters of every-day events are followed by two short, one of self-analysis; chapter 13 describes a long sea-journey, the short chapter 14 is again one of commentary, whilst 15 is a long account of fairly banal, undramatic activity at Fardelero's bar. After the static ending of section one there is a recovery of neutral momentum in section two, the counterpart of the

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<sup>23</sup>For example, on pages 35, chapter III and 45, chapter IV.



moderate pace and style of living portrayed in the action. Chapters 16 - 20 of the 63 page-long third section are a remarkable rhythmical structure. The opening chapter, sixteen pages in length, describes the energetic events of the carnival day, and is followed by an eleven pages-long chapter referring to the events of the night of that same day, when Jerry is tragically drowned. This is the climax of the action. Yet the three subsequent chapters are all long and depict moderate activity. A crescendo is attained, a climax reached, yet the tempo is prolonged. This we consider to be one of Aldecoa's master-strokes. Instead of letting the tempo slump, he draws it out and eventually allows only a neutral pace to resume, after a process of monotonous and gradual slowing - down. Human tragedy cannot impede temporal transience and continuity: painfully, Jerry's friends must carry on their lives. So, chapter 18 relates the finding of his corpse and 19 his burial: on his burial day "pasa lenta la mañana" (p. 191); the process is long because the adverse weather conditions make the task of digging a grave exceptionally difficult. After an interval of two days the English and Americans leave the island. Aldecoa has prolonged the bitter experience with extreme technical control in this block of consistently long chapters. It only remains for him to consolidate the newly-established neutral tempo in the final pair of short chapters, depicting a return to banal normality in the island's affairs, to complete the creation of a rhythmical structure whose function is to reflect both the fluctuation of human fortune and the continuous, incessant futility of life, a remorseless succession of transient present experiences.

In his compendium of stylistic and technical devices frequently

employed in twentieth - century writing, Pierre Astier refers to the popularity of the Technique de l'ego hic et nunc among certain authors.<sup>24</sup> This is the basic technique of presentation adopted by Aldecoa in Parte de una historia with its consistent use of verbs in the perfect and present tense forms, and of the two adverbs "aquí" and "ahora".<sup>25</sup> This technique involves an essential temporal bias, for it urges the reader to identify with the narrator so that both share the same mental focus, one simultaneous point of view. This psychological unity is further enhanced in Aldecoa's novel by the fact that the narrator and main character are the same person, a single consciousness. The reader, narrator and protagonist may co-experience the circumstances of the action with the same temporal perspective, for the reader apprehends an event or deed in the same instant in which the narrator-protagonist experiences it. The "yo" of the narrative is the catalyst; it is through him that the reader can simultaneously share the protagonist's experience. The reader can thus readily identify his present - his indisputable locus of reality - with that of the protagonist in the action.<sup>26</sup>

Aldecoa offers an implicit critique of the narrative technique he has adopted in this novel, demonstrating his refined awareness of the

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<sup>24</sup>Astier, op. cit., pp. 202-17.

<sup>25</sup>These adverbs appear consistently throughout the text, for example pp. 64, 81, 146, 209 etc.

<sup>26</sup>The reader's participation is the subject of José María Castellet's La hora del lector (Barcelona, 1957).

See below, p. 226 for comment on the deliberate artificiality of this engaging method of narrative presentation.



fictive medium's nature. This he does in terms which indicate a special awareness of the work's temporal dimension.

The title, Parte de una historia, is doubly significant. First Aldecoa uses the term "historia" ambiguously throughout the novel and equates fact and fiction by suggesting that story is a metaphor of existence. María Moliner catalogues the two meanings of the word: historia may mean i, the "conjunto de los sucesos ocurridos a una persona" or ii, the "narración particular de un suceso cualquiera".<sup>27</sup> In literary terms, it may refer to the protagonist's property or the narrator's. The narrator sees himself, qua protagonist, as living an "historia", i.e. his own life-history and development through time; his past is like "una historia sucedida a otro" (p. 64). Jerry's tragic death and the preceding events are also termed an "historia": "Así la historia de Jerry, regresado de la muerte en el naufragio, recluso en un corto espacio, en un tiempo medido, y regresando a la muerte..." (p. 183). But these are also events of which the narrator is giving a fictional account.

The equivalence of fact and fiction is illustrated by Aldecoa's definition of the characters' existence as 'story', 'monologue' or theatrical role. When Jerry is about to drown, "Beatrice, Laurel, Boby y David van regresando. Vuelven de otro naufragio. Un naufragio antiguo y cinematográfico. Los disfraces, trágicos y ridículos. Un gran final para esta función sonámbula que se ha estado desarrollando en la isla" (p. 173). The lives of Enedina, Felix and Beatrice are

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<sup>27</sup> Ana María Moliner, Diccionario de uso del español (Madrid: Gredos, 1966), II, p. 52.

accompanied by what the narrator terms a monologue (on pages 25, 40 and 74 respectively). This is a description accorded also to the young shepherdess whom the main character meets the day after his arrival on the island: "ingrato destino el de esta chiquilla, nacida para monologar desparramando los días de mano a mano en puñados de arena por el breve desierto de esta isla, caligrafiando con su varilla las horas muertas del pasturaje, entreviendo los reflejos de las aguas y las casas, que consuelan el aburrimiento" (p. 24). Yet this description is more than just a portrayal of a young girl's pattern of life. It may be considered a definition, by analogy, of the narrator's own existence and of his function as narrator. The first-person form of presentation is a monologue, and is the narrator not whiling away the empty hours - "desparramando los días..., caligrafiando...las horas muertas" - by relating the events of his experience? The empty hours are a potential threat since they expose him to the uncomfortable probings of his analytical conscience, for, as Dostoevsky reminds us, "imagination is fostered by solitude and idleness."<sup>23</sup> The narrative is a form of distraction and a way of passing the time. His futile existence may indeed be called, or compared with, an "ingrato destino" which blends fact and fiction together in a perpetual monologue.

The equivalence of private history and fictive 'story' is a major source of human perplexity, as Unamuno demonstrated in his Pirandellian novels of anguish. In Parte de una historia the narrator draws an analogy between Jerry's life - "historia" or "destino" - and the pattern imprinted on a carpet. He thus compares and confuses reality

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<sup>23</sup>F. Dostoevsky, White Nights and Other Stories, trans. Constance Garnett (London: William Heinemann, 1918), p. 17.



with an insubstantial, abstract representation. "Agacho la *babeza*, contemplando el dibujo de la alfombra, siguiendo su laberinto con los ojos, intentando descifrar el enigma de su comienzo y de su fin. Así la historia de Jerry, regresado de la muerte..., y regresando a la muerte, cumpliendo con la ley del laberinto" (p. 183). Jerry's life is thus reduced to the status of a *Borgesian labyrinth*, absurd, indefinible and defying rational explanation: human insecurity is a universal patrimony and not confined to the main character alone. This negative estimation of reality is emphasised in the narrator's fearful supposition that "al cabo del tiempo...es posible que todo pase a ser una leyenda, borroneada la realidad por una cadena de versiones fugitivas y quién sabe en qué acabará todo lo que ha sucedido y está sucediendo" (p. 106). This is a complete denial of human and cosmic purpose. The absence of Reason is a universal principle reflected in the literary confusion of the levels of reality and fiction, a conscious technical manoeuvre by Aldecoa.<sup>29</sup>

There is further significance in the novel - "*historia*" - story's purely narrative, fictional quality. The narrator conceives of the Americans' stay on the island not only as a private history but also as a fictional account "que cuando sea contada se perderá en el tiempo, como arrancada de la memoria, o tendrá la tangibilidad del presente o de la inmediata *víspera*, fulgurando con la luz siniestra del naufragio y de la muerte en el carnaval" (p. 202). This definition is crucial.

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<sup>29</sup>Except for one comment on p. 105 these references are devoid of playful Cervantine irony and have significance in a spiritual, rather than an intellectual, frame of reference.

It refers to the "historia" - sequence of events which constitutes the novel's action and which the narrator has been relating to the reader, and to the "historia" - fictional account we have been reading. The terms of expression are likewise crucial, because they illustrate the implications of this narrative technique for both narrator and reader. Two inseparable facts emerge from this definition. When the story is being told, "se perderá en el tiempo", a reference to the flowing transience of narrative expression. Furthermore, "tendrá la tangibilidad y perfiles del presente o de la inmediata víspera": the narration will contain the essence of concrete immediacy and presentness. The combined effect will then be of flowing, i.e. continuous, presentness as the reader's experience through the novel's temporal medium will be equated, even fused, with the narrator's. But the narrator's experience is also the protagonist's, because they are the same person. Any definition of the narrative is per se a definition of the protagonist's circumstance. So, the essence of both temporal dimensions, i.e. the narrator's and the protagonist's, is the flux of continuous presentness. Finally, since the reader recognises the undisputed transience and undeniable presentness of his reading process, he will all the more readily be able to identify with the protagonist's situation and participate in the general experience of continuous presentness. This general experience is the result of the deliberately chosen Technique de l'ego hic et nunc which represents formally the time-process depicted in the novel, that process which is the very stuff of the main character's life.

A second point of importance lies in the novel's title, for it is stated that the "historia" which appears there is only part of a more comprehensive context. The protagonist's past and future are unknown



quantities and he lives divorced from them in a continuous present. His experience, as related in the novel, is of a purely hermetic, parenthetical nature. His temporal situation is a reflection of his existential aimlessness: he is living ad interim, perpetually in the middle of a labyrinth; his life is a continuous means to no end, it is a mere parenthesis. That the labyrinth's source and solution, its "comienzo" and "fin", are enigmatically indefinible implies that the only tangible certainty in life is the actual moment, the middle of the labyrinth and that this real experience is but a segment of the whole process of life. So, each chapter is a self-contained part of the novel's action as each present is an independent experience; the novel's action, in turn, is only a part of the main character's life in toto.

To resume: there are three aspects of the novel's form worthy of critical attention. First, the adoption of the Technique de l'ego hic et nunc, with its exclusive tense system, endows the narrative - as both action and fictional account - with a quality of continuous presentness. Second, this impression of continuity is coupled with a sense of transience, the two being reflected in the novel's rhythmical structure. Third, Aldecoa's internal critique of the technique employed in Parte de una historia refers deliberately to the temporality of structure and is a valid, if complex, definition of his own novel's form. The novel's material is an "historia", a sequence of events which are real for the protagonist; it is also a fictional account made by the narrator for the reader. An equivalence is established between life fact and fiction: the shepherdess' life is a "destino", also a monologue. Jerry's life is termed an "historia" - story, and the protagonist's

life is a narration. According to the general literary definition embodied in the internal duplication and commentary, fictional narrative implies both transience and presentness; thus, the actual narrative in Aldecoa's novel is invested with these two qualities. But, since the central figure and narrator are the same person, the protagonist's experience is also characterised by transience and continuous presentness, as he explains in that admirable definition of the perpetual interlude of his current existence: "Estoy otra vez en la isla y de huida.... Huir acaso explica la huida" (p. 35).

The technique which Aldecoa has chosen conditions the novel's form in such a way as to make it a precise and organic representation of the central figure's vital experience of time. The sophisticated structure of Parte de una historia is of a piece with the structure of life depicted therein: continuous, transient and precarious. It reflects the protagonist's existential aimlessness and shows the emptiness of a life whose only value is the immanent one of perpetual effort denied ultimate fulfilment.

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## APPENDIX

## Gabriel Miró: a Thematic Alternative

Heretofore attention has been focussed primarily on a number of novels the tone and content of which renders them markedly metaphysical and ideological; these works have been selected as being representative of the twentieth century's climate of spiritual crisis. In so much, they represent a significant, but by no means exclusive, proportion of the general production of modern fiction in Spain: other tendencies of course exist besides that of the expression of transcendental issues focussed on the problem of ultimate human values. The aim of this appendix is to account briefly for another, complementary, style of 'sophisticated' novel in which time is both a predominant theme, in keeping with the era's sensibility, and an element of major structural importance in that novel's technical presentation; though it may not necessarily be developed in an overtly philosophical way. Miró's La novela de mi amigo (1907) is an apposite case for study. The tone is critical, but the protagonist's dilemma is one of sensitivity more than sensibility: feeling prevails over thought in his approach to the world. Miró's work, like that of Ana María Matute, Jesús Fernández Santos, Antonio Rabinad and Juan Goytisolo a half century or more later, is rich in ideological elements, but La novela de mi amigo, like Los soldados lloran de noche, Las catedrales, Marco en el sueño or La reivindicación del Conde Don Julián differs in tone from a novel by, for example, Kafka, Baroja, Ramón Sender or Luis Martín Santos; it differs, that is, from a novel the concern of which is the existential dilemma, expressed in terms of an abstract Problematik which affects the cerebral, rather than the emotional, aspect of man.

It is intended in this chapter to attempt an analysis and interpretation of a consistent body of symbolic expressions which Gabriel Miró incorporated into La novela de mi amigo,<sup>1</sup> and to endeavour to relate their significance to the protagonist's psychological motivation and their role in the novel's structure. We suggest that the true nature of these references is to be understood in terms of time and destiny and have chosen to interpret the narrative in those terms. For Federico destiny implies a tragic awareness of the crucial relation of man to nature, a relation which acquires its fullest significance in the context of time. The novel's plot may be summarised as follows: a deeply rooted feeling of guilt, stemming from his accidentally killing his younger sister at the age of 10, causes Federico Urios\* to blame himself for the death, some 30 years later, of his own daughter, and drives him to suicide. Federico's development and death may be seen as a return to a state of cosmic timeless peace and an escape from the fatal persecution of personal human misfortune. In this way it is possible to amplify existing criticism which has hitherto explained Federico's character in terms of family loneliness, lack of emotional stability and underlying nostalgia for childhood, innocence and security.<sup>2</sup> That standpoint fails to account conclusively for an essential aspect

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<sup>1</sup>References will be made to the Biblioteca Nueva edition of Miró's Obras completas, published in Madrid in 1953.

\* Edmund King mentions that Miró was baptised by a priest called Mariano Urios. See "Gabriel Miró: su pasado familiar," Papeles de Son Armadans, XXVII, 79 (1962), 77-8.

<sup>2</sup>A.W. Becker, in his El hombre y su circunstancia en la obra de Gabriel Miró (Madrid: Rev. de Occidente, 1958), includes a summary of the novel under a section entitled "La falta de amor", p. 157. Vicente Ramos adopts a similar approach in his El mundo de Gabriel Miró (Madrid: Gredos, 1964).



both of Federico's character and the novel's structure, i.e. a pre-occupation with time which is consistently expressed in symbolic terms.

Although in his panoramic El mundo de Gabriel Miró Vicente Ramos includes a chapter on the theme of time, together with an enumeration of the symbolic references used by Miró, his study does not touch on the formal application of time-themes or symbolism in any particular novel. In the available articles and studies of Miró's work there is a marked lack of thorough structural or formal analysis, apart from L.J. Woodward's "Les images et leur fonction dans 'Nuestro Padre San Daniel'",<sup>3</sup> R.L. Johnson's "Style, Structure and Significance in the novels of Gabriel Miró",<sup>4</sup> and Casaldueiro's perceptive but arbitrary "Gabriel Miró y el cubismo".<sup>5</sup> R. Vidal's stylistic and linguistic study fails to account for La novela de mi amigo's symbolism in spite of references to "le style image de Miró", in his Le style, les moyens d'expression de Miró, (Bordeaux, 1964).

The novel in question contains a consistent number of allusions the purpose of which can be seen as that of expressing certain specific ideas related to time and consciousness. Symbolic reference to water or the sea is a literary commonplace, and as such it is frequently used by Miró. The following instances, taken from later works, show his consistent use of images connected with water as a means of making symbolic reference to time. In Las cerezas del cementerio (1909), the following scene is depicted: "Cruzaron un puente ...todo se copiaba, dorado y

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<sup>3</sup>Bulletin Hispanique, LVI, (1954), 110-132.

<sup>4</sup>Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1971. Dissertation Abstracts, XXXII, 4004-A.

<sup>5</sup>In Estudios de literatura española, (Madrid: Gredos, 1962), pp. 219-66.

trémulo, dentro de las aguas, en las que parecía emerger el pasado" (Obras..., p. 385). El ángel, el molino, el caracol del faro (1921), contains an equally apposite description of a trip to sea in a boat: "Mis ropas, mi pulso, mi piel, mis huesos, el sabor de mi lengua, todo en mí participaba de la sustancia del mar y de lo que es mar sin serlo, como su aliento, su retumbo, su sol derretido y roto, los azules y blancuras, los horizontes, el tiempo, tiempo sin sentir su actualidad" (Obras..., p. 757).

La novela de mi amigo contains many references to the sea, waves, rocks, caves and a boat. Federico feels a great sense of affinity to the sea; his house overlooks it on one side; he refers to his memories in terms of waves and tides, and he commits suicide by drowning. An approach to the novel's thematic and narrative structures based on symbol-interpretation can contribute to explaining the work's meaning.

It is Federico's psychology and its development throughout the structure of La novela de mi amigo which invites critical attention. His vital experience and his basic psychology assume their fullest significance in relation to the problem of time. His psyche is time-structured: an acute awareness of himself and of time as the dominant condition of his life is the very essence of his character. His experience of life is inseparable from that of his own temporality: time may be a totally subjective experience and Federico the classic illustration of this characteristically modern idea. His temperament, as will be indicated, comprises a block of complexes, a hypersensitive self-awareness overshadowed by insistent memories and forebodings.



This consciousness of his own temporality and of the structure and direction of his life makes him a distinctive twentieth-century literary character of the sensitive, rather than the cerebral, category.

Like his anonymous predecessor in Aldecoa's Parte de una historia (see above, part II, chapter 3), Federico experiences time as a continuous present. In a key paragraph from chapter three he exclaims: "Mi temperamento es un caso prodigioso de fatalidad en el reflejo o absorción de todo. Por mí nada pasa y resbala; sensaciones, visiones, ideas, leyes hereditarias ... son fuertes ácidos que muerden en lo más hondo de mí, dejándome su marca." With reference to his family stock he continues: "A los hermanos de mi padre, a su linaje, debo mis momentos irascibles y de hosquedad...Y quiero a mi hija, quiero a mi hija. ¡Oh yo qué sé cómo la quiero! Es que en ella, dentro de ella, me parece ver los hijos de hijos suyos, es decir míos.... Veo así como dicen que Dios contempla lo pasado, lo presente y lo futuro en un presente continuado" (p. 138). The very essence of his emotional condition is inseparable from an awareness of time as a "presente continuado". The tempus fugit commonplace is inapplicable to Federico since nothing is irretrievably transient for him; past experiences remain ingrained in the deepest part of him. He also foresees the future as an immanent reality in his subjective time continuum with its essential property, a Bergsonian-like duration.

Federico's personal time scheme transcends the arbitrary spatial divisions of the horizontal, linear trajectory of past, present and future, resolving them all into a synthetic block of a depth dimension analogous with that of durée. Miro depicts the permanence of the past in Federico's person; he also portrays the flux of his psychic experience

and the development of his consciousness. The central element of his temperament is a feeling of guilt which might be adequately described by Bergson's concept of emotion, defined thus: "Le sentiment lui-même est un être qui vit, qui se développe..." Bergson refers to "une douleur d'intensité croissante" or "un désir qui grossit", and gives a definition of physical sensation quite applicable to Urios' circumstances: "une sensation, par cela qu'elle se prolonge, se modifie au point de devenir insupportable. Le même ne demeure pas ici le même, mais se renforce et se grossit de tout son passé."<sup>6</sup> The French philosopher also stresses that the present is the indisputable locus of reality: "our present is the very materiality of our existence."<sup>7</sup> Federico Urios experiences time similarly, as a continuous present where the past perpetuates, and the future anticipates itself as in a pure *durée*: so it is that he complains of his "dolor perdurable" (p. 128). His and Bergson's subjective accounts of temporality thus broadly coincide.

From Federico's response to the existential fact of human time derive his destiny and development throughout the 41 pages of the novel's action. This may be divided into two parts. The first comprises his self-declarations and autobiographical account; the second relates his daughter Lucita's illness and death, together with Federico's reactions which comprise an increase in self-awareness and self-analysis followed by the decision to drown himself. His daughter's death is the pivotal point of the narrative since it separates a predominantly static, mnemonic phase in Federico's development from the dynamic, eventful actuality of

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<sup>6</sup>Henri Bergson, Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience, pages 100, 26 and 118 respectively.

<sup>7</sup>Bergson, Matter and Memory, trans. Paul & Palmer (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1911), p. 178.



his emotional crisis and ultimate suicide.

In the expository first five chapters, Federico is presented to the reader as a 42 years old artist endowed with a high level of self-awareness, both psychic and physical, and an exaggerated tendency to self-analysis and self-recrimination. He is a man haunted by his past, and in the opening chapter the source of his perpetual nightmare is disclosed: he is obsessed with feelings of guilt over the death of his little sister Lucita who died after a struggle between the two children: anxious to claim a piece of bread for himself, the over-zealous Federico crushed the burnt crust against Lucita's body, thereby causing her death. This event had a shattering effect on the young boy and marked the end of his time as an innocent child. "Desde aquel momento fui ya hombre.... Yo envejecí por dentro para siempre. Me dolía el corazón de remordimiento por culpa de grande culpa de hombre" (122). "La primera vez que me estudié y supe de mi mismo," he explains to the narrator, "fue en la muerte de Lucita" (p. 130). This event opened his eyes to the adult problems of death, moral responsibility and guilt, and led to the birth of his awareness of himself in time: "Infancia es igual a inocencia...mas, fatalmente,... el estado de inocencia pasará a la categoría de recuerdo," comments Vicente Ramos.<sup>8</sup> Lucita's death is the root of Federico's oppressive guilt-complex, the reason for his nagging self-analyses, insistent memories and sinister forebodings; for his mind occupies these three temporal milieux: his self-awareness is grounded in the present, his traumatic memories in the past and his fatalistic premonitions in the future. A closer examination of his psychology may reveal the implications of his guilt obsession.

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<sup>8</sup>Vicente Ramos, op. cit., p. 100.

Federico is persecuted by memory and by consciousness of the misfortunes which have oppressed him throughout his life since that brutal awakening from innocence. Bewailing the terrible "virtud que tengo para resucitar lo pasado" (p. 122), he explains how heavily and inescapably the past weighs on him: "Soy carne de recuerdos" (p. 125). This is an especially significant phrase, for memory has a singular meaning for Federico. It is not only a psychic, mental or emotional process but an organic physical faculty as well: "Decía que las memorias no se guardan en mí estrechadas en un lugarejo del cráneo sino que ruedan por dentro de todo mi cuerpo" (p. 120). The memory-image formed by his brain has a psycho-somatic effect: "la imagen me da la sensación de lo fingido" (p. 121). The weight of his past and of his complexes affects Federico in such a way that his body reflects the state of his soul: "lo que me intranquiliza con más intensidad es lo pasado, y no se me presenta con tristeza dulce y pálida de cuadro antiguo...sino que atormentan todo mi cuerpo" (p. 120).

The torment and anguish resulting from his life-long experience of misfortune and the sense of persecution by the power of the past, inflicted by memory, have caused Federico to adopt an attitude to life which is not only pessimistic, but also fatalistic. That a feeling of oppression should grow into a belief in fate and a corresponding awareness of fear and death is a tenable psychological theory, but one which does not flatter the submissive Urios. Federico's deterministic creed is a telling illustration of his plight and total lack of existential defence. He confesses that "Soy creyente del sino cuando no me queda otro remedio" (p. 142), and summarises his life as an "engranaje de sucesos y fatalidades" (p. 144). To the theme of fate he relates that



of death and an awareness of death is the culmination of his desperation: "mi cuerpo con vida sufre constantemente el terror a un trozo de muerte" (p. 130). His fatalism, or what is virtually a death-wish, is "la decisión imperativa de mi alma y de mi carne... Abriré la boca," he says to the narrator: "Asómese. En lo hondo verá la descarnadura... Ahí tengo agazapada a la muerte. Es una necrosis reducida bravamente. Siento el terror de ese vecino fatídico y todo mi cuerpo se resiste contra su invasión" (p. 130). "Necrosis" is the physical counterpart of his emotional decadence and offers a parallel with his complex and attitude. The narrator comments meaningfully on Federico's scar, "la hendidura de sus mandíbulas, levemente traspillada, como si tascase madera, algo para reprimir o soportar un dolor perdurable" (p. 128). The essence of this "dolor perdurable" is his guilt complex, the physical effects of which Federico graphically describes thus: "Yo soy un cuerpo vivo que tiene muerto un pedazo de su carne" (p. 130). It can thus be seen that Federico's sense of temporality is completely central to his psychological presentation in the novel: his memory relates to the past and his fatalism and premonitions of death to the future. His "necrosis" suitably represents the effects of this time-awareness on his body: it is a reality of the present, produced by consciousness of the past and oriented towards the future, and it represents physically, both memory and fatalism, the two dominant characteristics of Federico's psychology.

It is no surprise that the powers of life, fate and misfortune should turn Federico Urios into the morbidly sad and passive human being he appears to be in so many scenes of the narrative. Submissive resignation is not, however, the only reaction of which he is capable. He claims to have adopted a positive attitude towards existence, in

spite of the overwhelming forces set against him: "estoy amenazado y me defiando, porque amo la vida con toda mi alma y con todo mi cuerpo" (p. 140). He has tried to exercise and preserve his personal freedom - within the limits imposed upon him by his temperament - by becoming a man of action, will-power and vitalistic determination: "Yo vivo íntima, intensamente, razonando mi vivir fisiológico" (p. 140). Alluding to his "necrosis", he asserts that "Siento el terror de ese vecino fatídico, y todo mi cuerpo se resiste contra su invasión... La mitad del triunfo es de mi voluntad y eficacia. Yo exclamé '¡No morirás!' Y no moriré, al menos por ahora. Y amé loca, inmensamente la vida hasta en mi posterioridad más lejana. Por eso desde entonces ando, camino, subo montañas, recorro los peñascales y arenas de la costa ... oigo el estruendo de mi sangre como un torrente íntimo... ¡Oh, vida, vida, vida mia!" (p. 130). This wholehearted, frenzied worship of nature enables Federico to communicate in dynamic, positive terms with the infinite and the timeless in Creation: "se me figura que tengo raíces y que penetran en todo," he claims (p. 140). It is this affinity with the cosmic forces that enables him to participate in nature's primitivism, as depicted in the episode of the peasant and his ferocious dog in chapter II. The narrator and Federico are attacked by the mastiff and only through Federico's determined aggression is the danger averted. Having killed the dog, he is ready to deal likewise with its resentful owner, an aged peasant. "Me apartó." the narrator comments: "Ondulaba su pecho fieramente... Estaba agigantado, escultórico, engrandecido por el sufrimiento de verse impulsado a la tragedia bárbara, homérica... Instintos sanguinarios, atávicos resucitaban en el humilde... Vivíamos un retorno de la Humanidad a días de fiereza ominosa" (p. 132). This



communion with the infinite is illustrated also by the visual fascination which the sea and the sky exercise of Federico: "Cuando contemplo lejanías, espacios, o estoy en altitudes, creo ver, dentro de la trasparenca azulada, una pulverización inquieta y tenue" (p. 136). Looking out from his studio windows, "salta como un pájaro mi mirada y busca la lozanía de los árboles y del ramaje trepa al cielo o se entra en la vía del mar..." (p. 144). His mystical insight reveals to him the infinite depths of the horizon and is a faculty which provides a provisional solution to the problems of Federico's existence, since it integrates him with his natural, or world-environment.

Vicente Ramos defines this worship of Creation and the resort to nature as "hiloísmo".<sup>9</sup> In its temporal aspect it suggests an analogy with the Jungian principle of an eternally present universal consciousness. According to Jung, man is capable of identifying with certain cosmic archetypal forces which exist autonomously in a mythical realm of the world's spiritual order. Although these may appear to the sceptical pragmatist to be abstract, epiphenomenal fictions, Jung asserts that they form the basis of psychic behaviour, a transcendental source of human spirituality and a universal soul. "We shall do well," he argues, "to admit that there is justification for the old view of the soul as an objective reality" and advocates man's submersion in a common consciousness, or in what he terms the "collective unconscious". This, he points out, "seems not to be a person, but something like an unceasing stream or perhaps an ocean of images..." Federico Urios fulfils the principle requirement of the Jungian thesis since he interprets reality through a system of archetypal imagery. In addition to the

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<sup>9</sup>V. Ramos, op. cit., pp. 77-80.

images connected with the sea, Federico's repertoire of mental pictures includes those relating to wheat, birds, animals and insects. Jung states that "beyond [the human intellect] there is a thinking in primordial images -- in symbols which are older than historical man; which have been ingrained in him from earliest times, and, eternally living, outlasting all generations, still make up the groundwork of the human psyche."<sup>10</sup> Since he is capable of this mental, or psychic, involvement, Federico can at times subordinate his personal life to this macro-structure of the spirit by submerging himself vitalistically in the spatio-temporal plenitude of nature.

Basically, however, this activist worship of Creation is an Unamnesque escape from the horrors of personal existence: fate, time and consciousness. After Lucita's death Federico will confess that his vitalism was a negative or provisional attitude: "He hablado siempre glorificando la vida... y sólo he querido cobardemente la mía, porque me horrorizaba la muerte y me espantaba la idea del enterramiento... Y me di a buscar, delirante, la fuerza de la carne; por eso caminaba, y subía a las cumbres y tragaba el ancho viento del mar... Huía de las estrecheces del hogar" (p. 157). That it was a deficient attitude is shown by the fact that Urios' professed positive intentions ultimately yield in the face of his central debility: an emotional instability which stems from his childhood and is sustained by his marriage. His motives are primarily emotional not rational, and his determination eventually breaks down. Chapter IV offers an example. It begins with

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<sup>10</sup>C.G. Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), pages 211, 215 and 129-30.



Federico's argument that he is not like the majority of men who submit aboulically to fate and external forces, but it continues with Federico in much less forceful mood, bewailing the mediocrity of his life: "¡No es gran lástima que, siendo yo extraordinario no haya hecho nada de particular!" He then lapses into sentimental reflections about his daughter. When the narrator suggests that they take a boat-trip, Federico replies in world-weary fashion: "No, Señor. ¿Para qué? Sólo ambiciono seguir en mí mismo. Créame, todo es igual. Yo he viajado y padecido inmensamente" (p. 141). His profession of a creed of Dionysian activism gives way to defeatism and uncovers his weakness. Federico Urios is a man fatally persecuted by human misfortune who longs to escape from his despairing, time-ridden existence into the infinite, timeless peace of nature and the cosmos. Yet as long as he is alive, that personal misfortune will be an intruding obstacle to him in his attempts to communicate fully with the transcendent powers of the world.

The second part of the novel, beginning with chapter VI, puts all Federico's resolutions to the test and deprives him of the existential supports upon which he has hitherto relied. It proves to him the insufficiency of his attempts to make sense of life and serves only to confirm his belief in man's vulnerability and incompatibility with the world. A striking, surrealist image of fragmentation illustrates his emotional helplessness: "Yo no me comprendo..., yo no me comprendo con los ojos dentro de un frasco, las piernas encima del tejado, los brazos en la calle y el cuerpo plantado en un bancal, como una cepa, y siendo al mismo tiempo yo, viviendo en unidad..." His faith in the human will is totally destroyed: "Pero ¿es que resulta que lo que debiera ser más de nosotros: la vida, es precisamente lo más apartado y ajeno a

nuestra voluntad?" (p. 151). Lucita's mortal illness reduces him to complete misery, since even the sky, the land and the sea in which he formally had so much faith, are unchanged by the daughter's death. His sense of guilt and responsibility is exacerbated by the association between the dying daughter and the dead sister, her namesake: "y pareció vagar por la estancia el espectro abrazado de la hermanita mártir" (p. 153).

Chapters VII and VIII record Federico's reaction to Lucita's tragic death, the result of which is an increase in the force of his feelings of guilt and an intensification of his awareness of time, fate and death. His consciousness of past, present and future reaches a peak. A further crushing blow of providence submits him to the temptation of beginning a liaison with Isabel, his sister-in-law, a temptation of which he is irritably aware: "¡Dígame si blasfema mi alma, si tengo derecho a ese goce brotado en la agonía de Lucita! Estamos hundidos entre sombras de fatalidad. ¡ Dichosos los que viven sin notarlas! Soy miserable ¿verdad? ¡Sí que lo soy! ¡Pero qué culpa tengo, Dios!" (p. 156). Federico's problem is an excessive awareness (cf. 'notar') of the "sombras de fatalidad" which imply weight of the past and imminent doom of the future, and the terrible conviction that "yo tengo la culpa; yo he matado a mi hija... Yo sólo he amado mi vida...Y he matado, he matado...He matado ya dos niñas." "Hundiéndose en sus entrañas el insaciable pico de sus pensamientos" (p. 155), he confesses that "es mi verdadera culpa" (p. 158). His frenzy gives way to subdued resignation and defeatism: "estoy trabajado; siento el cansancio de mi sangre." His weariness and deception are complete, vitalistic hilozoísmo submits to quietist hilozoísmo. "He logrado



amar la poderosa, la verdadera vida," he declares, admitting, nevertheless, that "aún me llegan las ansias y tentaciones de la pasada, de la ruin." Yet these he chooses to transcend and finally exclaims: "La santa quietud de todo ¡cómo atrae! En lo más íntimo de los árboles, de la tierra, del cielo, de las aguas, entra nuestra alma...prueba el sustento de la miel de una sonrisa de generosidad y de unas palabras de Jesús ... 'Venid...venid a la paz infinita de mi regazo' clama la Creación" (p. 153).

His suicide is the climax and consequence of his emotional exhaustion, the final affliction in a frustrated life of suffering and oppression. The final event is pregnant with the significance of all that precedes it and Federico's last moment includes the totality of his existence in a synthetic continuous present on the brink of eternity. His death coincides with the culmination of his guilt complex in the last utterance of the words which have haunted him since his sister's death: "Lucita..., Lucita..., Lucii...". Simultaneous with the climax of his psychology is that of his physical life, which also culminates in destruction: death by drowning puts an end to his "vivir fisiológico" (p. 140), which reflected and implied all his psychological traumas. Exhausted by the tribulations of his time-ridden personal existence, Federico finds a permanent refuge in the infinite, timeless peace of nature. Integration with the transcendent powers of the cosmos is, however, conditional upon the suppression or annihilation of human factors, which, in Federico's case, are those problematical issues embedded in his temporal consciousness. Cosmic timelessness of necessity excludes human temporality.

In the light of this interpretation of Federico Urios' psychological development we may now examine the role played by the symbolic expressions relating to the sea. These rhetorical elements prove, on close inspection, to be of primary importance to the novel's stylistic, thematic and structural levels. The subject of La novela de mi amigo has been defined broadly as an escape from the persecution of fate, memory and time and a return to a state of tranquillity and timelessness in nature. It will be seen that the symbolism reinforces this interpretation.

Federico's guilt-stricken conscience and the traumas of his oppressive memory are constant factors of his existence and belong to the essence of his personality. Memory is an organic experience: "los recuerdos para mí no habitan sólo en la memoria sino dentro de toda mi carne," a statement which Federico further qualifies by symbolic expressions: "Vea qué raro: Me parece mi cuerpo completamente vacío, hueco, sin más entrañas que el corazón como un peñasco encerrado en mi osamenta color de sol y muy fuerte...Fíjese, fíjese en mis costillas: son enormes...¿Ha visto usted en los muladares alguna bestia casi devorada? Parece un barco naufrago mostrando la armazón de sus costados... Sí, sí; más que de mula, es de navío el esqueleto de mi pecho" (p. 120). His thorax is like the hulk of a wrecked vessel, whilst the memories which fill his chest batter his heart like sea waves a rock: "...decía que las memorias... ruedan por dentro de todo mi cuerpo; es un tronador oleaje de recuerdos que se rompe en espumas amargas contra mi única entraña... ¿La recuerda? El corazón, y llegan a mi frente, salpicándola...Mírela que sudada. Es el rezumor de aquella amargura" (p. 120). The force of Federico's premonitions is also expressed in symbolic fashion, and his total consciousness



is defined in one synthetic description: "tengo sensación de montaña cavada, donde entra un mar que ruge lo pasado y truena vida futura. Me zuma la piel amargor de olas" (p. 129). Apart from the actual use of symbols, a point of additional relevance and interest resides in the vocabulary used to describe this water. It indicates the following qualities: destructive violence - "náufrago", "troneador", "ruge" and "truena" - and bitterness - "espumas amargas", "el rezumor de aquella amargura" and "amargor de olas". With a tragic sense and symbolic vision not unlike Miguel Hernández's, Federico Urios sees himself at the mercy of a relentlessly corrosive guilt-complex, figuratively represented by the pounding waves of the salt-bitter sea.

The continual appearance of these images throughout the text constitutes a structure which reflects the mounting tension Federico undergoes on the psychological and emotional plane. In the initial references, the symbolic comparisons are expository and prophetic: Federico describes himself as a marine rock or cave and predicts his death by drowning. They undergo a modification when applied to his vitalistic behaviour, that professed activism which is ultimately an abortive reaction against persecution by the pressures of fate. Dynamic self-assertion is reflected in this proud description of his physique: "Es tremendo; proa forrada en cobre de nave triunfadora para hender la vida" (p. 129), and he defines the feeling of strenuous activity, "el estruendo de mi sangre", as "un torrente íntimo" (p. 131). The peak of his primitive violence and instinctive vitalism is his killing the mastiff, an event which Federico relates in these terms: "es que entonces ese oleaje de recuerdos y amarguras que truena dentro de mí era de sangre, y no se rompía contra mi corazón sino que de este peñasco

manaba encendida, gruesa, casi cuajada... Ese viejo hubiera astillado con su hacha el espolón de mi pecho" (p. 134). The intense waters of aggression, like those of desperation, are turbulent and forceful and the energetic Federico is determined to sail triumphantly through the sea of life. But, as the preceding account has suggested, there is a great disparity between this posture and his ultimate fate.

The change of circumstances and the decisive alteration in Federico's attitude are reflected by a further transformation in the symbolism. After the horror of Lucita's death, he confesses to having been an egoist: "es todo vida; es todo, y nosotros la reducimos a la nuestra y sólo pensamos pobremente en ella. Y nuestro grito exultante, de triunfo y bendición a la vida, lo dicta un hervor de nuestra sangre" (p. 159). He sees the falsity of his vitalistic posture, according to which he "caminaba y subía a las cumbres, y tragaba el ancho viento del mar" (p. 157). His resultant weariness and self-recrimination are expressed in his last conversation with the narrator: "Estoy trabajado; siento el cansancio de mi sangre..." In moods of energetic vitalism he had described his blood as "un torrente íntimo", but now the "hervor" of his blood is quelled and exhausted, his thoughts turn to the "santa quietud" (p. 158) of Creation. He has always enjoyed the peacefulness and infinite proportions of the sea and the sky, but now he aspires to a permanent state of communion with nature. Conquered by life, fate, memory and time, he longs to merge into the peaceful timelessness of Creation and he chooses the sea as his ultimate resting place. By drowning he will escape from his painfully organic, "necrotic" existence, for the pains of his body are those of memory and fatalism, his mental afflictions.



That Federico should choose drowning as a method of suicide is especially significant. The pattern of his destiny, which may be concisely defined as a process of adjustment between man and nature, culminates in the ultimate reconciliation of the two. Federico, however, had prophesied this in line with his creed of premonitory fatalism, and in symbolic terms. In the very first chapter of the novel, he had referred to his psychological complex as a barrage of story waves, adding that "mi muerte ha de ser la quietud de esas olas; después su pérdida, su filtración y ... nada más..." (p. 121). When he drowns, his fiction is converted into fact as the waters of imagination and consciousness fuse with those of external nature in a grand structural climax. The real sea in which he annihilates himself is one of tranquillity and it differs radically from that of his previous experience, in a manner consonant with the terms of his prediction. Federico's suicide is presented as a defeated ship's slowly sinking below the quiet waves:

Su pecho se sumergió como la proa de una nave vencida; hundiose su cuello; siguió el lento naufragio de la barba, de las mejillas, de los labios... Las aguas... habían quedado desiertas en llanura infinita de silencio y de luna... (p. 160).

As stated above, the incident represents Federico's final submission to fate and his paradoxical escape from it, and time, into infinite, timeless tranquillity where he will be harassed no more. At this point in the narrative, the symbolic waters are the last articulation in a structure which converts prediction into reality, and they represent the realization of fate, time and destiny.

La novela de mi amigo depicts a dialectical process of providence whereby an unfortunate individual moves from despondent and premonitory anxiety, through frustrated attempts at exhilarating vitalism to an

apocalypse of defeatism and suicide. Federico Urios' developing temperament and activity are accompanied by a dynamic symbolic structure itself the vehicle and mirror of time and destiny. It is through this structure that Miro portrays the process whereby Federico's death-wish is realised. The table on page 262 illustrates the poles of that process by indicating the fundamental differences between the symbolic waters of life and consciousness and those of death and cosmic transcendence.

With relation to form, the body of symbolic references incorporated into the work's horizontal, linear architecture makes La novela de mi amigo a convincing example of 'the novel as chronomorph' or temporal structure. "A novel," claims Eleanor Hutchens, "is pre-eminently a time-span shaping a variety of time-products, the pressure of time making itself felt through the grammar of narrative and the rhetoric of temporal change, the whole being long and complex enough for this rhetoric to figure forth the experience of passing time."<sup>11</sup> What Miró's novel presents is the movement in Federico's experience from time to timelessness, in relation to a natural-human polarity. But the development from prophetic fatalism to fate's very fulfilment is a process which can only occur within the medium of time. The author is thus obliged to provide an external framework for the action depicted in the novel: the third-person narrator's co-presence with Federico Urios is recorded with no evident concern for chronological precision from "una mañana cálida y tranquila de marzo" (p. 125) to the height of summer. This is, however, only a superficial category of form and one of purely external value. It is the deterministic nature of Federico's psychology, illustrated and reinforced by the conscious pattern of symbolic expressions, which instils

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<sup>11</sup>Hutchens, "The Novel as Chronomorph," p. 221.



## LIFE

## DEATH

Time, personal memory, fatalism  
and the continuous present.

The timelessness of cosmic  
consciousness/unconsciousness.

Psychosomatic, organic reality.

"Pérdida, filtración y...nada  
más".

Violence, destruction and  
despair: "troneador oleaje",  
"ruge", "trueno".

"La paz de los mares", "quietud":  
"suave palpitacion", "llanura  
infinita de silencio".

Vitalistic hilozoísmo -  
alternative or antidote to  
despair.

Quietist hilozoísmo -  
solution to despair.

"Proa forrada en cobre de  
nave triunfadora".

"La proa de una nave vencida".

"Sangre como un torrente  
íntimo".

"El cansancio de mi sangre".

Tension and antithesis.

Ultimate synthesis.

A linear process depicting the realization of a death-wish.

in La novela de mi amigo its deeply structured internal 'chronomorphism'. The symbolism also contributes to the work's value qua novel. The generic theme of the novel, that of human adaptation to destiny, is expressed in this work with the help of a well-integrated body of figurative references which are at once an illustration of that temporal theme and an interesting contribution to the rhetoric of temporal change so characteristic of the genre.

La novela de mi amigo, then, is an example of a tightly-structured novel whose form and content are illustrations of the human concern with time. It is, furthermore, representative of a class of novel in which the theme of time is presented according to criteria of human emotion and sensitivity, as opposed to an approach based on cerebral or rational considerations. The dilemma portrayed in this novel is tragico-lyrical in tone and substance, and differs, therefore, from the abstract mood of those novels of critical ideology studied in the preceding chapters.



## CONCLUSION

The purpose of the six studies offered here has been to illustrate the prominent role of the essentially chronomorphous novel in Spanish prose fiction of the contemporary period. Time is a subject of paramount importance in Western culture, especially from the 1850's to the present moment; the importance of time is to be noted in the voluminous body of artefacts which both deal with this theme and translate it into technical terms of form and structure. The Spanish novel aligns itself with that major tendency in fiction illustrated by the works of Proust and Mann, Borges and Carpentier.

The chronomorphous structure is a formal counterpart of that contemporary sense of reality, the coherent attitude held by many thinkers and creative writers of the twentieth century which is a reaction against the Weltanschauung of the preceding period. The structural paradigm with which the novelist of the nineteenth century chose to account for the nature of reality has been radically revalued and ultimately discarded as obsolete by those of his successors whose prime orientation is philosophical. Reality, and time in particular, is no longer susceptible to interpretation as a coherent, unified and organized system or construct of phenomena which stands in a positive relation to man and his experience. The critical twentieth century Spanish novelist has deliberately sought a form which might adequately convey this sense of existential insecurity caused by man's negative appraisal of time and history.

Unamuno's Paz en la guerra is the first example of the replacement of the structural paradigm by an innovatory pattern whose inner logic complies with considerations of the nature and structure of time or

temporal experience. The individual and collective experience of time as a dialectic of condition, confusion and resolution is expressed via a developing sequence of tense forms: as a result of the inherently temporal function of these forms, the novel's structure is a dynamic account of human experience. For Pachico the protagonist time is a problematic aspect of life, but it is an existential dilemma for which he ultimately finds a solution in the contemplation of a realm of epiphenomena incorporating the immanent essence of reality. The philosophical basis of Unamuno's argument may be found in the theories of Spinoza, Hegel and the krausistas, all of which he synthesised in his monistic creed of intrahistoria. Whilst Unamuno continued to embody his concern with time in later novels, Paz en la guerra occupies the historical position of forerunner since it contributed unequivocally to the establishing of a fictional type in Spain: the novel-as-chronomorph begins here with Unamuno.

Azorín's La voluntad provided another foundation-stone for that framework of structural innovation elaborated in Spanish fiction during the early years of the twentieth century. In this novel, Azorín ruthlessly forsook the traditional properties of structure characteristic of the well-made novel in Spain from Fernán Caballero's La Gaviota to Alas' La Regenta and Valera's Pepita Jiménez. He constructed a plot on the principles of discontinuity and inconclusiveness. A pattern of cyclical repetition, realized on a more sophisticated scale in Doña Inés, is also a feature of La voluntad's structure. The novel's form is a concrete expression of those metaphysical concerns and conclusions which Azorín had drawn from his reading of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Guyau, among others. The author's utterly pessimistic view of the world at that time



included a negative evaluation of both history, or objective cosmic time, and personal temporality: history as cycle is a monotonous, senseless process of world tedium, whilst the individual's experience of time as relentlessly disjointed and lacking in coherence and ultimate purpose is an equally nihilistic vision of reality and human destiny.

Unamuno and Azorín were together responsible for making the Spanish novel of the twentieth century one in which temporal factors would be consistently presented with an ever-increasing degree of technical sophistication.

Our analysis of Miró's La novela de mi amigo has drawn attention to a body of symbolic references thematically derived according to the main character's time-conditioned psyche and formally incorporated in an action-structure whose temporal nature is enhanced by them. The sequence of events accounts for Federico Urios' behaviour which has an essentially emotional, a-rational basis. As a result of this perspective of character, the novel contains no explicit statement of philosophical interpretation since neither the author, the narrator or the protagonist overtly expresses any value-judgments of the human condition or of the world's ultimate meaning. It is the formal properties of La novela de mi amigo which bring that work within the scope of this thesis. The plot, broadly summarised as the realization of a death-wish, gains its fullest significance when the predominant role of the central symbol of water is recognised. The evaluation from an imaginative experience of death by drowning to the realization of that premonition is a symbol of time's passing from the fictions of the past to the facts of present reality. Time, for Miró, was an essential datum of human experience and one which he translated into the structural dimension of La novela

de mi amigo, thereby endowing this work with the fundamentals of the chronomorph.

As early as 1907, the Spanish novel could boast the works of Unamuno, Azorín and Miró as illustrations of temporal structures. After the Civil War Cela published Pabellón de reposo, a novel whose composition, though outwardly mechanical, is nevertheless highly imaginative. The presentation of events in the form of a recurrent pattern and the process of structural and rhythmic ralentissement achieved by certain semantic and syntactic rhetorical devices are requirements of form dictated by thematic considerations. A hypothesis of spatio-temporal relativity starts from the world's movement in terms of rotation and orbit and suggests that the interdependence of spheres or frames of reference conditions human perception and experience of time. As part of their response to the monotony of existence in the sanatorium, the inmates experience time as a purposeless gyration and tiresome state of inertia; to the narrator and reader, external witnesses of this tableau of suffering and anguish, the 'events' within that circle of inactivity will appear to be part of a temporal scheme where movement or speed is illusory or non-existent. Cela adapted a twentieth century theory of natural philosophy to the literary medium of fiction and devised a structure to account for the cosmic and personal levels of temporal reality implied in a version of that theory.

Martín Santos constructed a chronomorph which incorporated certain formal devices already used in previous Spanish novels of the century. However, a diachronic and comparative analysis of the structural characteristics of Tiempo de silencio illustrates the development undergone by the Spanish chronomorph, a development in terms



both of technique and ideological motivation. Fragmentation, or the presentation of time as disrupted sequence, was a principal aspect of, e.g., Gómez de la Serna's El incongruente; Martín Santos adopts this technique in response to new philosophical criteria. The Existentialist conception of time as a series of contingencies dependent on the individual's unpredictable and ecstatic response to critical situations had been proposed by Kierkegaard and subsequently confirmed and elaborated by Heidegger and Sartre. Martín Santos now drew on the twentieth century documents of Existentialist ontology, in particular on Heidegger's account of temporality, in order to depict with clarity and precision the position of man in time: these thematic propositions form the ideological basis of the structural fragmentation in Tiempo de silencio. The presentation of events as discontinuous may also be regarded as subordinate to the overall portrayal of Pedro the protagonist's temporal experience as a dialectical process generated internally by his own behaviour and decisions and externally by those people and circumstances with which he comes into contact. This personal development constitutes the novel's principal infra-structure. The author's comprehensive account of the interrelated subjective and objective factors of human reality is a synthetic vision without precedent in the history of the modern Spanish novel. The reality of Pedro's inner being is presented through the stream of consciousness technique, of which Martín Santos makes varied and sophisticated use at a level of formal expertise hitherto unattained in the Spanish novel. The stream of consciousness method is a formal representation of the nature and structure of subjective temporality. It relates to the philosophical concerns of Existentialism and shows the awareness central to Da-sein, the abstract

formula of man's essential Being. Tiempo de silencio may be seen as an incisively conceived and skilfully executed chronomorph with an organic correspondence between thematic motivation and structural practice.

Aldecoa's Parte de una historia offers another illustration of the degree of creativity and refinement now attained in the composition of chronomorphous novels in Spain during the post-Civil War period. The sustained and virtually exclusive use of the present tense is a formal device which embodies a distinct structure of temporal experience. The protagonist-cum-narrator lives in a perpetual present and experiences a stream of perceptions and reactions from which the inherent temporal form of his existence derives. Aldecoa indicates that his choice of narrative technique is deliberate by offering a highly conscious and well-balanced critique of this method of presentation via the artificial present tense. This self-awareness and confidence was lacking in Unamuno's experiment with tense system in Paz en la guerra. The structural and narrative technique adopted in Parte de una historia has its thematic counterpart in those philosophies of the present expressed, for example, by Bergson, Schopenhauer and Borges. The concentration of human activity in the fleeting present is symptomatic of existential futility and uncertainty and may be valued only in a framework of purposeless immanentism. The protagonist's position in time and his response to it are factors of experience inseparable from the socio-existential aspects of his previous and actual circumstances. A refugee from urban civilization and the oppression of disruptive quantitative chronology, he aspires to identify with the qualitative wholeness of cosmic values which the integrated islanders enjoy. The novel's



structure reflects the attempts made by the narrator to align his experience with the fluctuating continuity of nature. It also demonstrates the process of his disillusionment and ultimate failure, since his stay on the island is but temporary respite and no more than a parenthetical or partial release from traumas which transcend the limits of time and space in which he has artificially sought to enclose himself. The fusion of structural and narrative planes, and the resulting simultaneity of action and account, experience and expression, makes Parte de una historia a convincing example of the novel-as-chronomorph: the chronology of the 'action' and the time - pattern of the present tense narration, in conjunction with the reader's involvement, illustrate that medium's capacity for embodying temporal experience at the level of form.

We may conclude that the Spanish novel of the twentieth century includes convincing examples of essentially temporal structure; the present study has concentrated on those works which illustrate the level of technical expertise attained by Spanish authors in this respect. On the assumption that the history of fictional structures is related fundamentally to the history of the ideas which prompted the selection of those forms, we have interpreted these examples of the Spanish chronomorph as a concerted expression of the essential philosophical tenor of the contemporary period. If the arts embody the sensibility of the age, these novels may be considered as part of the Spanish contribution to a consensus existing within Western literature.

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